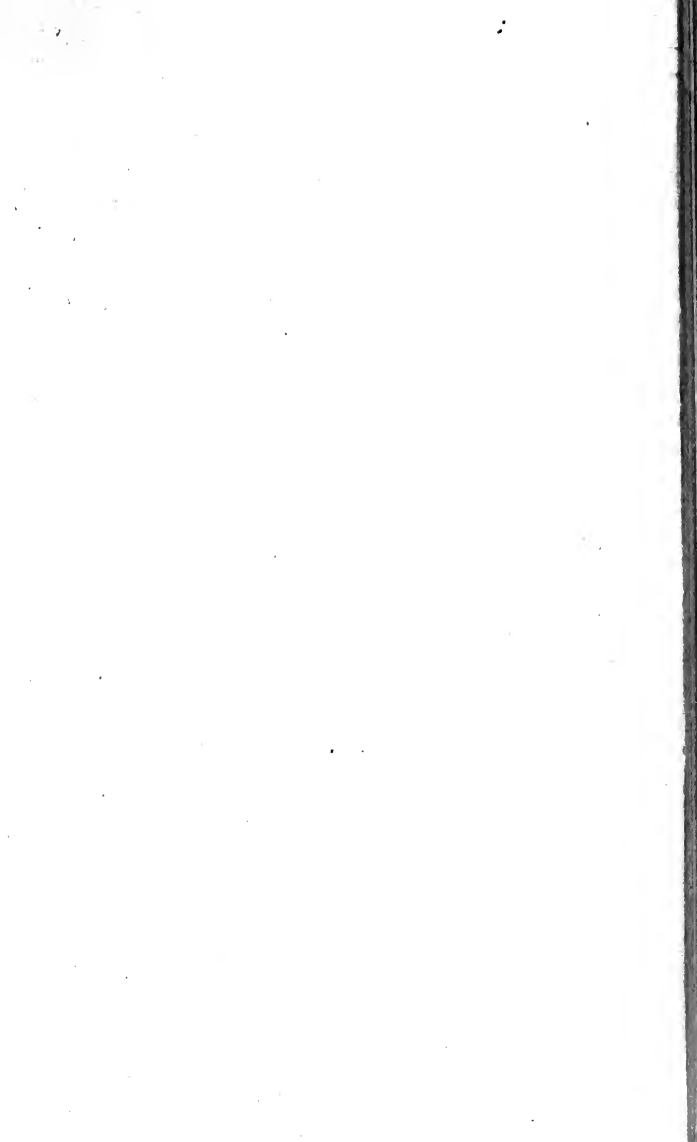




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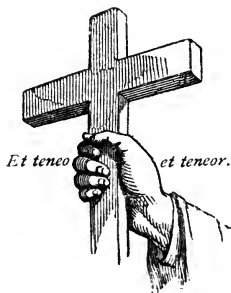
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P O E M S

THESE are the many-coloured beads of life ;
Blame me not, gentle reader, if their hues
Should please thee little, for I did but choose
And thread them where I found them, by the strife
Of Time's great ocean cast upon the shore—
Stay thou with me awhile, and tell them o'er.

P O E M S

By DORA GREENWELL



ALEXANDER STRAHAN, PUBLISHER
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Dedicated
TO THE MEMORY
OF
ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

"If I despair of being like to thee,
I, for such likeness, give thee boundless love."
Schiller's "Don Carlos."



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CHRISTINA.

FATHER, when I am in my grave, kind Father,
Take thou this cross,—I had it from a girl,—
Take it to one that I will tell thee of,
Unto Christina.

I may not part with it while I have life ;
I kept it by me, treasured it through years
Of evil, when I dared not look upon it ;
But of the love and reconciling mercy
Whereof it is a token, now it speaks.
Sore bitten by the fiery flying serpent,
Yet have I strength to raise my languid eyes,
And fix them on that Sign, for sin uplift
Within the wilderness, and there my gaze—

My straining gaze—will fasten to the last,
Death-glazed upon it. Oh ! may then my soul
Be drawn up after it unperishing !

Thou knowest of my life, that I have been
Saved as by fire,—a brand plucked from the burning ;
But not before the breath of flame had passed
On all my garments, not before my spirit
Shrunk up within it as a shrivelled scroll
Falls from the embers, black,—yet unconsumed,
For One in Heaven still loved me, one on earth !
O Father, I would speak to thee of Love ;
We learn the price of goodliest things through losing.
They who have sat in darkness bless the light,
And sweetest songs have risen to Liberty
From souls once bound in misery and iron ;
So, Father, I would speak to thee of Love.
Fain are my lips, and fain my heart to sing
The glad new song that both have learned so late.
Once, ere my soul had burst the fowler's snare,
I heard a wild stern man, that stood and cried
Within the market-place ; a man by love
Of souls sent forth among the lanes and highways,
To seek, and haply save, some wandering one

Long strayed, like mine, from flock, and fold, and
pastor.

His words were bold and vehement ; as one
Set among flints, that strove to strike a spark
From out dull, hardened natures, then he used
The terrors of the Lord in his persuading ;
Death, Judgment, and their fearful after-looking,
Grew darker at his words : “ How long,” he said,
“ O simple ones, will ye be fain to follow
Hard service and hard wages, Sin and Death ?
Now, the world comes betwixt your souls and God ;
Here, you can do without Him and be happy ;
He speaks to you by love, ye put Him by ;
But He will speak to you by wrath, and then
Vain will it be to shun Him, to forget,—
In the next world ye may not do without Him :
Seek God, run after Him, for ye must *die* !”
Oh ! then, I thought, if one like me might speak,
If I might find a voice, now would I raise
A yet more bitter and exceeding cry,
“ Seek God, run after Him, for ye must LIVE !
I know not what it may be in that world,
The future world, the wide unknown hereafter,
That waits for us, to be afar from God ;

Yet can I witness of a desolation
That I have known ; can witness of a place
Where spirits wander up and down in torment,
And tell you what it is to want Him *here*."

I had no friends, no parents ; I was poor
In all but beauty, and an innocence
That was not virtue—failing in the trial.
Mine is a common tale, and all the sadder
Because it is so common : I was sought
By one that wore me for a time, then flung
Me off, a rose with all its sweetness gone,
Yet with enough of bloom to flaunt awhile,
Although the worm was busy at its core.
So I lived on in splendour, lived through years
Of scorning, till my brow grew hard to meet it ;
Though all the while, behind that brazen shield,
My spirit shrank before each hurtling arrow
That sang and whistled past me in the air.
On every wall methought I saw a Hand
Write evil things and bitter ; yea, the stones
Took up a taunting parable against me.
I looked unto the right hand and the left,
But not for help, for there was none would know me.

I knew that no man cared for my soul ;
Yet One in heaven still loved me, one on earth !
But being then unto myself so hateful,
I deemed that all did hate me, hating all ;
Yet one there was I hated not, but envied,
A sad, despairing envy, having this
Of virtue, that it did not seek to soil
The whiteness that it gazed upon, and pined.
For I had loved Christina ! we had been
Playmates in innocent childhood ; girlish friends,
With hearts that, like the summer's half-oped buds,
Grew close, and hived their sweetness for each other.
She was not fair like me unto the eye,
But to the heart, that showed her by its light
Most lovely in the loveliness of love.
I parted from her on Life's cross-road, where
I parted from all good ; yet even then,
Had prayers and tears prevailed, we had not parted.
Long after me I heard her kind voice calling,
" Return !" yet I went on ; our paths struck wide,
As were the issues that they led to ; then
She lost me, but I never lost her : still
Across the world-wide gulf betwixt us set
My soul stretched out a bridge, a slender hair,

Whereon repassing swiftly to and fro,
It linked itself unseen with all her lot,
Oft seeking for a moment but to lose
The bitter consciousness of self, to be
Aught other e'en in thought than that I was.
I took a portion of her innocent life
Within myself ; I watched her in her ways,
Unseen I looked upon her in her home,
Her humble home. Yes ; I that once had scorned
At lowly poverty and honest love,—
I know not if it were its joys or sorrows
I envied most ! *Her* tears were like the dew
That lies all night upon the fruitful field
That Heaven hath blessed, and rises there again.
I was like blasted corn shrunk up and mildewed,
Like sere, dry grass upon the housetops growing,
Whereof the mower filleth not his arms,
Nor he that bindeth up his sheaves his bosom.
Earth, earth methought and Heaven alike refused me :
None gave me the kind wish, the holy word.
I had no joys, no griefs ; yet had I joyed,
Then none had said, “ God bless thee ! ” had I
grieved,
Then none that passed had said, “ God pity thee ! ”

I said, Christina wept. Within her home
There was one only little one, a girl :
Oft had I marked her playing in the sunshine,
Oft by the hearth-light on her father's knee
I watched her (little did Christina think
Who stood without) ; but she was taken from her,
This child of many prayers and hopes : I saw
The little bier borne forth ; this tender flower
That Love had nursed so warm, yet could not keep,
Did seem to leave a blank where it had been.
Christina wept, but yet as one whose tears
Rained inward on her heart, whence rising oft
They filled her eyes, but did not overflow them :
For still she moved about the house, serene,
And when her husband sought his home at eve
She met him now, as ever, with a smile,
So sweet, I know not if he missed its joy.
But oft I tracked her thoughts unto a field,
Quiet, yet populous as the city round it,
Thick sown with graves ; yet there the mother's heart
Had marked a place, and there her constant feet
Had worn a path. At early morn, I knew
Oft went she by the grave to weep unseen,
So oft at nightfall there I scattered flowers,

The fairest and the sweetest I could find.
I thought—She will not know whose hand hath strewed
 them,
So wonder and a loving guess may cheat
Her mind, a moment taking it from grief.

I stood beside that grave one summer night ;
The skies were moonless, yet their dusk serene
Was grateful to my spirit, for it seemed
To wrap me from the world, myself, and heaven ;
And all the air was soft and cool, methought
It kissed my cheek as if it were a child
That loved me,—sinless, shrinking not from sin.
Old legends say, that when the faithful join
On holy Sabbaths with one fervent voice,
Then doth prevailing prayer hold back awhile
The edge of torment, and the lost have rest.
So then, perchance, some gracious spirit wept,
And prayed for sinners, for the voices died,
The wailing ones, the mocking, at my heart ;
And through the hush came up a wish, a yearning—
I know not where it took me—not to heaven,—
Yet, had I ever prayed, it had been then ;
I sought not death, for that were but a change

Of being, and a passage to a world
Where thought would after me to hunt and vex ;
But to cease utterly to be, to find
A place among the rocks, among the stones,
With things that live not, that would never live,
To pass absorbed, and be at rest for ever.
So stood I, holding in that trance the flowers,
A wreath of white Immortelles, that as yet
I hung not on the gravestone, when I heard
A sudden step, and was aware that one
Had come upon me in the gloom ; I felt
A grasp upon my arm, detaining kindly,
A hand that sought to fold itself in mine :
Before she spoke, I knew it was Christina.
“ And who art thou, with charitable hand
Such kindness showing to the dead, the living ?
Now let me look upon thy face, for long
My soul hath deemed of thee as of the angels
That come and go unseen, and only traced
By deeds that show some gracious Presence near ;
Yet, surely thou art one whom earth had taught,
Through sorrow and through love, this gentleness
With grieving hearts, with stricken ones ; from mine
The blessing of the sorrowful be on thee ! ”

But at her words a madness took my soul ;
They seemed to mock me ; falling one by one
Like gracious drops upon my heart, they smote
Its stagnant waters, stirring there no spring
Of life or wholesomeness : yet were they stirred.
Now would I speak with her, the fire was kindled ;
Long had it smouldered, long enough consumed me.
Now by its flashes she shall read my soul,
Methought, and look upon me as I am ;
So, with a gesture of the hand, I led
Christina, following on my rapid steps
Like an unquestioning child, as if my will
Had power to draw her, till within the door
Of the great Minster passing, in the aisle's
Dim light we stood, together and alone.

Oft had I shunned Christina ; now beneath
A steadfast lamp that burned before a shrine,
Confronting her, I said, " Now look on me ;
Where is the blessing that thou spakest of ?"
But to my words she answered not ; methought
She did not catch their import—so her gaze
Was fastened on me—then her very soul
Gave way in tears ; she took me in her arms,—

Me, wretched one, that never thought to feel,
In this, or in the after world, again
Such pure embrace around me ; to her heart,
That heaved as if it could not hold a joy
Made out of such an anguish, close she pressed me,
And, sobbing, murm'ring to herself or heaven,
In language half articulate, the words
Came broken : " I have found thee ! I have found
thee !"

" What hast thou found, Christina ?" then I said,
And with the words unto my lips arose
A laugh of bitterness, whose mocking tones
Through all the dreary hollow of my heart
Woke up the echoes of its desolation ;
" What hast thou found ? Speak not to me of her
Whose name perchance thy lips are framing now,
The Magdalene ; my life hath been as hers
But not my heart, for she loved much—for this
The more forgiveness meeting ; I love none !"
But then Christina pointed to the flowers
Still hanging on my arm ; "*Thou* lovest none !"
And gently laid upon my mouth her hand,
A soft restraining curb that now my speech,

Like an ungovernable steed sore stung
And goaded into frenzy, spurned aside,
And sprang the wilder ; " None, not even thee !"
I cried ; but then the whiteness of her face
Smote on my spirit, taming scorn to sadness.
" Why should I vex thee with my words ? of love
I know but as I know of God, of good,
Of hope, of heaven, of all things counted holy,
Know only by their names, for nought in me
Gives witness to their natures ; so, to speak
Of them is but to take their names in vain.
Oft hast thou told me how souls hang on God
Like leaves upon a gracious bough, that draw
Their juices from its fulness ; long ago
Mine fell from off that Tree of Life, thereon
Retaining not its hold ; a withered leaf
It lies, and bears the lightning's brand upon it."
" Yea, truly," said Christina, " it may bear
The spoiler's mark upon it, yet, like his *
Of whom the Scriptures tell us, may thy soul
(A watcher and an Holy One befriending)
Have yet a root within the earth ; though bound
About with brass and iron, still the dews

* Daniel iv.

Lie on it, and the tender grass around
Is wet with tears from heaven ; so may it spring
Once more to greenness and to life, for all
The years it felt the pressure of the band
So close and grievous round it." But I cried,
"There is no root ! a leaf, a withered leaf,
Long tossed upon the wind, and under foot
Of men long trodden in the streets and trampled,—
God will not gather it within His bosom !"
"And who art thou that answerest for God ?
Now from this mouth of thine will I condemn thee ;
For, saying that thou knowest nought of love,
How canst thou judge of Him whose name it is ?"
But here she clasped her fervent hands, and all
The sternness melted from her : "Look on me,
A sinner such as thou,—yet I have loved thee ;
Remembering thee above my mirth, how oft
Beside the cheerful board that Heaven had blessed,
I ate my bread in heaviness ; and then,
Had I known where to seek thee, had risen up
And left my food untasted, till I brought
Thee in to share it ; to my lips thy name
Rose never, so I feared some bitter word
Might chide it back within my wounded heart,

That shut it in from blame ; but then my prayers
Grew dearer to me, for the thought that *here*,
In this pure Presence only, could I meet thee ;
Here only to the Merciful could name thee,
Could love thee, plead for thee without rebuke.
Yes ! even in my sleep my quest went on ;
Through dreams I ever tracked thee, following hard
Upon thy steps, pursuing thee, and still
Before I reached thee (thus it is in dreams)
Came somewhat sundering us, and I awoke
With tearful eyes, and on my lips half-framed
Some loving word, recalling so the past,
I thought thou couldst not turn from it away.
Yes ! I have loved thee, I, a poor weak woman,
One like to thee, yet holding in my heart,
That else were dry and barren to all good,
One drop of love from out of God's great ocean.
And thinkest thou that we can love each other
As He loves us,—as He that made us loves us ?
And sayest thou, ' I am cast out from God ' ?
No ! He hath lovèd thee from everlasting,
Therefore with loving-kindness will He draw thee.
Oft doth He chide, yet earnestly remember,
Long waiting to be gracious : come, poor child,

Thy brethren scorn thee, come unto thy Father !
Away from Him, in that far country dwelling,
Long hast thou fed upon the husks, too long
Hast hungered sore, while no man gave unto thee ;
But there, within thy Father's house, is Bread
Enough and still to spare, and no upbraiding.
My little Child, my Innocent, that scarce
Had left His arms, nor angered Him, nor grieved,
Was not so welcome back to them as thou :
Even now, a great way off, even now He sees
 thee,
And comes to meet thee—rise and go to Him !
The home is distant, but the way is nigh.
Oh, Thou who, dying, madest us a way,
Who, living, for us keepest ever open
That access to the Father, look on us !”
So speaking solemn, looking up to heaven,
She knelt down where we stood ; upon my knees
Beside her drew me ; holding both my hands
Firm folded 'twixt her own, she lifted them
Towards the Mercy-seat ; within her arms
She held me, still supporting me ; it seemed
As then the very fountains of her soul
Were broken up within her ; so she wept,

So pleaded : " Jesu, Lamb of God, O Thou,
The Father's righteous Son, that takest all
The sin of earth away, have mercy on us !"
But I was passive in her arms, I knew
She wrestled sorely for me ; yet as one
That feels in heavy dreams a strife go on,
And may not stir a finger, by the chain
Of slumber compassed ; so my torpid soul
Slept numb, yet conscious, till within my heart,
That had no movement of its own, but rose
Upon Christina's heart that heaved beneath it,
At length this miracle of love was wrought :
Her spirit lay on mine, as once of old
The Prophet on the little clay-cold child
Outstretched, through warmth compelling warmth
again,
And o'er the chaos of the void within
A breath moved lightly, and my soul stretched out
Its feelers darkly, as a broken vine
Puts forth its bruised tendrils to the sun :
A mighty yearning took me, and a sigh
Burst from my bosom, cleaving for my soul
A way to follow it, and in that hour
Methought I could have died, and known no pain

In parting from the body ; then I cried,
“ Oh, turn Thou me, and so I shall be turned !”

.
When we arose up from our knees, her face
Was calm and happy, then she kissed me, saying,
“ I call thee not my Sister, as of old,
But come with me unto my home, and there
Be thou unto me even as a Daughter,
In place of her God gave and took again,—
So hath He given thee to me.” Thus she spoke,
And drew me on constraining ; but my soul
Held other counsel, minded in itself
That I would look upon her face no more,
Though all my soul clave unto her ; as he
From whom our Lord drave out the vexing demon,
Had followed fain upon His steps for ever,
So had I tarried by her well content ;
And yet I answered her, “ Entreat me not ;
This may not be : yet fear not thou for me ;
I go upon my way, that crosses thine
Perchance no more ; so give me counsel now
Upon my journey, for, as thou hast said,
The home I seek is far away, the road
Is strait and narrow, hard for erring feet

Like mine to walk in." Then Christina said,
" I can but give thee counsel in the words
Of Him our Master, 'Go and sin no more !'
Keep in the Way, and as thou goest, there
A Blessing will o'ertake thee ; thou shalt meet
With One to pour within thy wounds the wine
And oil of consolation ; He will set thee
On His own steed, and bring thee to an inn
Where thou mayst tarry till He comes again ;
Yea ! all thou spendest more He will account for,
For thou wert purchased and redeemed of old :
Now must I leave thee, for the night wears on."
But still I held her closer, " Not before
I too have blessed thee, even I, Christina ;
May now the blessing of a soul well-nigh
To perishing be on thee ! may thy love
Be poured, a thousandfold by God requited,
Within thy bosom." Then Christina turned
Once more beneath the lamp, and smiled farewell,
Smiled as if then the sweetness of her soul
Rose to her very lips and overflowed them,
But spoke not : passing swiftly through the porch,
The darkness took her from me.

That same night
I left the guilty city far behind me ;
Thou knowest, Father, of my life since then.
Here have I found the place Christina spoke of,
A goodly inn, where they have cared for me,
These gracious souls, who loving so their Lord,
And covetous for Him, upon the coin
Long-lost, defaced, and soiled, could trace His image
And read His superscription, half outworn.
Soon must I leave it for a surer refuge.
I sent Christina long ago a token,
To tell her it was well with me, and now
Fain would I send this other one, a sign
From Him that loved me in the heavens, to her
That loved so true on earth. When I am gone,
Kind Father, to my rest, take thou this cross,
Take it to her that I have told thee of—
Unto Christina.

GOD'S SINGER.

HE bore a harp within his hand,
And on his breast outspread
The flower, that from the dawn to dusk,
For love of one o'erhead,
Still follows on a look, till all
Its golden leaves are shed :
Ye had not called him grave or gay,
For old nor yet for young
Ye had not known him ; so he seemed
To be them all in one ;
And only in his smile ye knew
The Singer ere he sung.

“ A Name, a Name is in my heart,
It bideth, hidden long,

Because my hand hath not a chord
That would not do it wrong ;
So pure is it, so sweet, unmeet
For rounding of a song,
Yet in the cleft, its honey left
Hath made my spirit strong.

“ A thought, a thought is in my heart
Though seldom on the string ;
I keep it, round all other thoughts
Its sweetnesses to fling :
Yea ! were it not within my soul,
Methinks I could not sing,
Nor ever raise my voice in praise
Of any other thing.”

So sang he sweet, so sang he clear, and lift his look
above,
They said that listened, “ Now he thinks of her, his
ladye love ;”
But through the wood, where in the calm of summer's
noon hung still
And motionless each little leaf, there ran a sudden
thrill.

He stood within a Castle's keep,
A Castle that could wear,
Stern looming o'er its rocky steep,
As dark a frown as Care.
Yet now it smiled, as one beguiled
Of ruggedness through sleep,
So sweet a sunshine on from tower
To tower did flash and leap,
And all the summer's noon did swoon
About it, breathing deep.

On coigne and gurgoyles little heads
In carven stone did seem
To wink and peep, as they did creep
From out some evil dream ;
And over each, on leaf and scroll,
Strange words were writ, that seemed to flit
Within each mask, and be to it
Interpreter of soul :
"Sans Roi, sans Loi, sans Foi : " and there,
Above the gate a time-gnawed wreath
And legend mouldered half away,
Spoke fair to passer underneath :

“Entres dansle Chateau des delices, et fais ce
que boudray.”

A fountain warbled, more it seemed
In weariness than play ;
The birds sang loud, but not as in
The forest depths sing they ;
Yet ringing clear above them all,
Up rose the minstrel's lay,
As freshly shook as when the brook
Sang with him on his way.

The soft air lifted it on high,
Through pleasant bower and hall,
And ladies o'er the balcony
Leant, holden in its thrall ;
It floated in above the din
That rose within the Court,
The grey-beards paused above the cup,
The gallants 'mid their sport ;
“Ha !” spake the Baron, “bring him in,
The merry Jongleur ! to the strings
The wine'll move, and dance within
Our beakers while he sings.”

As came the minstrel in the hall,
He bore him high and free,
Yet lowly bowed, as one long vowed
To gentle courtesy.
Then o'er his harp, with thought to claim
A silence ere he sung,
He passed his hand, as if to tame
Each bounding chord that sprung
Beneath it ; as a loving heart,
Now fretted, and now wrung,
Must rise and fall unto the thrall
That over it is flung ;
Then soft and low, as is the flow
Of waters, to whose drip
A child hath danced, his finger fine
From string to string did slip,
Till, gathered in a sudden shower,
The spray-drops glanced and flew
As light as when, 'mid thick-wove boughs,
The sunbeams trickle through.

And then, with firmer, bolder touch, he struck a
deeper strain,
And high amid the cloven hills, by thunder rift in twain,

The swollen torrents leapt and sprang, and down the
flashing rain

Poured in through ghastly rents, while swift, from giant
hand to hand,
Like arrows torn from fiery sheaf, the lightning's jagged
brand,
Flung careless on from peak to peak, lit up the
startled land ;

And then a swell, a rush as of broad rivers in their flow, .
Ran through it, and the forest shook with rustlings
light, and low
Smooth-sweeping winds, till underneath, you heard
the grasses grow.

And as the stormy waves withdrew,
Disparting here and there,
The flood rolled backward, and to view
The mountain summits bare
Pierced upwards, till a world swept out
Green, jubilant, and fair ;
Then clear the singer's voice arose
Upon the freshened air.

He sang an old and simple tale,
A sad and earnest song,
Of things most frail that did prevail,
Of weakest things made strong ;
Of tender Truth, that did not fail
For time or change, and long,
Long suffered, rather than to give
Content to suffer wrong ;
A song that hath been oft-times sung,
A tale that hath been told
Since first this world of ours was young,
Nor with it groweth old ;
While human eyes keep tears to weep,
And hearts have love to hold
For friend or lover under sun,
Or underneath the mould.

The matron on her Dais high,
That held her place of pride,
Turned, with a trouble in her eye,
Her stately head aside ;
For through the music little feet
Went moving, and the child
That One who loveth souls took back,

Unaltered, unbeguiled,
With sweet voice small did seem to call
Upon her name, and smiled.
The Gallant drew his plumèd cap
Across his brow, and sighed;
A hand was clasped within his own,
A step was by his side ;
A soft low voice he seemed to meet,
Each whispered tone he knew ;
None since had ever been so sweet,
Nor any since so true,
For like a child, unto the hill
Whence springs the rainbow, driven,
His mind on many a glittering quest
Since then had toiled and striven,
Yet never had he touched again
The point where Earth meets Heaven.

The grey-haired Seneschal, that leant
Upon his staff apart,
Felt somewhat trembling on his lip,
And tightening round his heart,
A ruined shrine, that had not seen
Its angels *all* depart ;

For now he felt his mother's kiss
Upon his cheek, and heard,
Oh ! sound approved from lips beloved,
Her fond and praiseful word.
And as each aged fibre shook,
And trembled to the strain,
He heard the cawing of the rook,
He was a boy again !
With glad feet plashing in the brook
That wimpled onwards, fain
Its shining boundary to trace,
And clip his little world within
Too small a space to leave a place
For sorrow and for sin.

And through each heart a pang shot strong,
And on it darkly bore
A sense of somewhat that had long
Been lost, unmissed before ;
But now, to reach a guiding Hand,
The Spirit groped and felt
Across the void, and for the land
It yearned where once it dwelt ;
It longed to knit some broken troth,

And then, as if it knew
All good below is but the show
And shadow of the true,
Each thirsted sore to claim once more
His birthright, and renew
A higher 'legiance, whence the soul
Had lapsed and fallen through.

And there was Silence, such as falls
On one that, musing lone,
At midnight on a city's walls,
Sees moonlight round him thrown,
So heavenly fair, ere he is 'ware
His inner sense hath grown
More pure, and may not well endure
To think on Pain and Sin,
On all that shines so fair without
That lurks so foul within
Our mortal state, and ill can wait
Those clearer Heights to win,
Where never goodly thing goes out,
Nor evil cometh in !

At length the Baron broke the spell :
" Sir Minstrel ! sorry cheer,

For all thou playest deft and well,
Methinks thou bringest here :
So now that ye have made us grave,
Your penance I will choose,
To troll us out a joyous stave,
As merry Trouveurs use,
A song of jest and gaillardise
To wreathe about the cup,
That, while we drain it, ladies' eyes
May glisten from it up."

"Fain is my harp," the minstrel spake,
"To bring you joy and ease,
Yet would it break if I should take
A strain on it like these :
Its only skill is such to wake
As may my Master please."
"Thy Master !" then the Baron smiled
A scornful smile and proud,
"I did not deem ye brethren free
To other service vowed
Than flowing of the Malvoisie
And largesse clinking loud."
"Yea," said the Minstrel, "I am free,

And yet a Lord is mine,
A Service that is liberty,
A Master who is Thine !”

Then sprang the Baron from his seat ;
“ A priest without the frock !
Now bind him, varlets, hands and feet,
And fling him down the rock ;
For I have sworn, no hireling shorn
Among their tribe should cross
My threshold, but have cause to mourn
His boldness to his loss.”

“ They bar against Thy priest the gate,
Thy Singer passeth free,
So hold me ever consecrate
Thy Witness still to be.”

Thus, looking up, the minstrel spake,
And, turning, went his way
From out them all, and none did seek
To hinder him or stay ;
And as he passed beneath the gate,
A bird was singing free,
And from the chapel in the wood
Rose vespers solemnly ;

And as upon the air serene
His song ascended calm,
Methought it filled the space between
The Carol and the Psalm !

A STORY OF OLDEN TIME.

SO spake the gentle Lady Maude :—

“He loves me not ! He said,
‘Nay, wed me unto whom ye list,
Now Margaret is dead ;
But dearer than the reddest rose
In bride-bower blushing brave,
Is the little daisy flower that grows
Upon my true love’s grave ;
And on my lips the kiss I took
So cold from hers will cling,
For marriage-bell, for priest and book,
For spousal troth and ring ;
So, if in kiss of loveless lip,
In clasp of loveless hand,

There lie a spell old feud to quell,
And quench strife's smouldering brand ;
If loveless bonds can fetter hate,
Be then this bridal sped :
Yet in an evil fate ye mate
The Living with the Dead.' "

So spake the Lady Maude, and fast her tears fell
down like rain :

" Ten long—ten silent years my breast hath striven
with this pain,

And flung it off awhile, then ta'en the weary load
again ;

Ten years—ten years that I have lived the noble
Guilbert's wife,

Have crept uncheered by look of love, unmarked by
word of strife ;

Within the house an honoured dame, a lady unre-
proved,

Within the heart a slighted wife, a woman unbeloved !

Long, long ago I thought this woe would cease, or I
should prove

How patient grief wins quietness, how patient love
wins love ;

.

Long, long ago I thought this woe would cease, or I
should be

Love-lifted up to happy life, death-gathered to the
free.

The smile of love, the smile of death, oh ! wondrous
sweet they be,

The brethren's and the father's kiss, and neither were
for me.

“The brethren's and the father's love ! O Father,
having Thine,

And can we seek aught else for joy, or in our sadness
pine

To rest on one another's breast ! O Father, can it be
That we can need each other still ?—each other,
having Thee ?

Yet even so hast Thou been pleased to weave us in
one woof,

To bind us in one golden sheaf, that none may stand
aloof

From these sweet sacred bands, and say, ‘In having
One above

So have I all ;’ that none may scorn his human
brother's love

That *Thou* art mindful of; and thus, since Thou hast
loved us, none
That loves Thee best may ever rest in loving Thee
alone !”

So spake she calmer : “ He who made best knoweth
how we feel,
So dare I show Him of the thoughts that never I
unseal
To human ear, in very fear lest censure should lie
cold
With our dead fathers in their graves, heaped o’er
them with the mould,
Or follow on my living lord ; nay, rather let this blame
Be mine that dared to give him more than he hath
cared to claim.
And yet small blame, for who e’er lived with *him*
that loved him not ?
And never sign or word of mine hath wearied him, I
wot,
For from the first my heart its lot accepted, under-
stood ;
I saw that of the things he had he gave me what he
could.

No lady in the Marches sees, for pleasure or for
state,
So fair a train of servitors upon her bidding wait ;
I never lacked for page in bower, for minstrel in the
hall,
For gentle merlin on my wrist, or palfrey in the stall,
Robe, gaud, and gem, each costly gift that on love's
altar lies,
Were mine, but never with them that which only
sanctifies ;
And he perhaps who gave them all did never guess or
know
(For loving hearts run fast, and eyes unloving read
them slow)
That I had cast them from me fain, so might I but
have found
The greeting that he gave to serf, the look he gave
his hound,
The smile and largess he flung down unto a vassal old,
Fain had I gathered up the one and doubled him the
gold.

“ I am not fair as Margaret was ; yet faces have grown
bright

That nature made not so, methinks, when seen by
household light ;
And in the heart a mirror set hath shown them forth
approved
In every look ; not only they, the lovely are the
loved !
For never hath my name been borne on tilt or tour-
ney's din,
Nor minstrel ta'en it, for his song a sweeter praise to
win ;
Yet children, leaving brighter dames, have run in
haste to press
Their rosy cheeks against my own,—yes, children !
they could bless
With unsought tenderness. Methinks a child upon
my knee
Had been a pleader winning love both for itself and
me ;
A child's soft touch, perchance, had stirred the springs
of feeling so,
That even to *my* lips had risen its strong, calm over-
flow ;
Yes, even so, yet well I know these thoughts but
bring unrest,

They strive, but may not better that by God marked
out for best,

For me the best; for every path, the sunlit and the
dim,

The flower-strown as the thorny Way alike have led
to Him ;

Yet finding Love's sweet fountain closed, it even thus
befell

That searching farther on I found Life's clear up-
springing Well."

So spake she fervent : " I have learned by knocking
at heaven's gate

The meaning of one golden word that shines above it,
' WAIT !'

For with the Master whom to serve is not to ride or
run,

But only to abide His will, ' WELL WAITED IS WELL
DONE.'

So waiting, on my heart sweet words, like fragments
of a song

Down floated from a happy place, have whispered,
' Not for long.'

So be it ; yet before I go, if I might but require

One boon, if God would answer me in this my heart's
 desire,
Then would I ask, through toil, through pain, through
 death itself, to see
My husband's eyes, before mine close, look once with
 love on me.
Then with this arrow that hath long through strength
 of pain upborne
The breast that hid it, would my soul be gently,
 gently drawn
Forth by a loving hand, that so my spirit as it passed
Might breathe out slow and soft and low 'At last, at
 last, at last !' "

SECOND PART.

All night beneath a double weight, and followed by a
 track
Of fire that flashed along the dark, the steed, with
 ears laid back
As if he heard a cry behind, and was aware that
 death
Or life was laid upon his speed, bore on with deep-
 drawn breath,

And nostrils quivering wide, until at length the stars
withdrawn

Had melted out into the dusk that comes before the
dawn.

Then cheerly to his steed outspoke the rider of the
twain

That bore the nobler, knightlier mien, and slackened
girth and rein :

“Three rivers hast thou set between the foemen and
our flight ;

Now softly, gallant Roland, now, for soon by this
good light,

Slow breaking pale o’er moor and dale, above the
eastern hill,

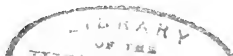
Soon shall I see my castle rise : art weary, or art
chill,

Thou gentle youth, that tremblest so? Nay, only
with the cold

I ween, for thou approved hast been for steadfast and
for bold.

Small speech has passed between us yet, small guer-
don hast thou shared

Of thanks as yet for all that thou for me hast done
and dared ;



But One shall thank thee, for I wot that on my lady's
 'hest

(A gentle lady, true and kind!) thou camest on this
 quest.

Yet tell me now, where foundest thou the strength,
 and where the skill

To win at me, to set me free, so young, so tender
 still?"

Then answered, faint and low, the Page, as one that
 strives to speak

In spite of very feebleness, "Thou seest I am weak;
So took I twain for counsellors that have been held
 from old

More strong than any under heaven, and one of them
 was Gold."

Long thoughtful paused the Knight, but not above
 the Page's word,

That fell perchance upon his ear (so deep he mused)
 unheard.

Then spake he: "When at first I heard thy sweet,
 low-warbled song,

That night by night came floating light around my
 dungeon strong,

Now far and faint, as if it woke and died among the
stars,

Now nearer, like a friend's kind voice beneath my
prison bars,

I thought some spirit of the blest watched o'er me
from above,

And mourned for me, itself set free from all of earth
but Love."

But sudden spake the Page, and clenched his hand,
"To thee it seemed

That Love dwells only with the Dead ; yet have the
living deemed

That they could also love, I ween." No further word
he said,

But ever fainter came his breath, and lower sank his
head.

"Now rest on me, thou gentle youth, for thou art
sorely spent ;

So lean thy head upon my breast ;" and ever as they
went

Still firmer round his drooping form Lord Guilbert did
enfold

His stalwart arm, and strove to wrap and shield him
from the cold,

And whispered oft, "How farest thou?" and still the
answer fell
As from a soul that moaned in sleep, "Yea, with me
it is well."

So fared they on in silence, till at length, as clearer
broke
A glimmer on the hill's dusk edge, the boy, as one
that woke,
Half roused from heavy dreams, spake slow: "This
dawn to me breaks dim;
I pray thee lift me off from steed ere yet my senses
swim,
And bear me to the little well that springs beneath
the hill,
Thou knowest it?" But then the Knight spake
soothingly and still,
"A little, little space, dear youth, yet bear thee up,
be strong;
My gentle lady waits for us." "Nay, she hath waited
long,
So may she tarry yet awhile. Oh, bear me to the place
Where now I hear the waters flow; I ask it of thy
grace!"

Then kind, as one with feebleness that will contend
no more,

The good Knight lifted him from steed, and tenderly
him bore,

Light as an infant in his arms, and passive as the dead,
Adown the grassy woodland path, with firm and
cautious tread ;

And after them a sunbeam slid, a glitter struck all
through

The dell, thrid deep with gossamers and films be-
sprent with dew ;

On swift and silent sped the Knight, yet at each step
he trod

He startled up the happy things beloved of Sleep and
God,

And through the rustling grass and leaves a hum, a
twitter broke,

As if the Soul within them hid half stirred before it
woke.

So gliding swift 'twixt heavy boughs that, stooping,
seemed to sign

With wet, cool finger on their brows a benison
divine,

They gained a rocky, moss-grown stair ; and where
the fountain sprung,

One moment as above its deep dark mirror Guilbert
hung,
He saw each wild-wood flower and fern that grew
around the place,
And looking upward from its depths a white and
deathly face !

There smiled she on him in the light that never yet
was cast
By earthly dawn. "Thou knowest me ! thou knowest
me, at last !"
But all his soul grew wild ; from lips as pale as were
her own,
He murmured, "Blind as ever ; blind, that only *now*
have known—
Death, death !" But with a quiet mien she spake,
"Not death, but life,
The winning of a long-sought boon, the ending of a
strife ;"
And laid her head upon his breast, like one that,
wearied sore,
Sighs deep, yet well content to know the struggle
comes no more.
He looked at her, he smote his hands together with a
cry,

“True heart and sweet, that hast not spared for one
like me to die,
O *live* for me!” “Yea, would I fain, for what is
death to prove
What life bears feeble witness to — the steadfast
strength of love!”
So spake she tenderly : “yet One above shall choose
for me,
That chooseth best,—for each is blest,—to live, to die,
for thee!”

“Oh, come unto thy place at last!” and to his heart,
smit through
With love and anguish, Guilbert then the dying woman
drew ;
Two human hearts that Life had held apart with
severance keen,
Together met and mingled fast with only Death be-
tween.
At length she raised a calm, glad face, and looking
upward, drew
A long, deep, blissful breath—again—again—for now
she knew
The token ; it was Pain and Life together that with-
drew.

The sun brake solemn. "There," she spake, "I see
the golden gate,
But not the word that shone for me so long above it,
'WAIT!'
Now with this sprinkling on my soul, this Baptism,
I go
Where evermore from shore to shore the blissful
waters flow ;
I see them flash in sudden light, I hear them as they
roll,
The billows of the flood wherewith our God makes
glad the soul ;
There, by that river of delight, on goodly branches
grow
All fruits of pleasantness and peace, we failed to find
below ;
All blossoms withered in our heat, or blighted by our
frost ;
All things we missed and did not mourn ; all things
we loved and lost :
There, O my husband ! *there* this love of mine, that
was not given
To bless thee on the earth, will bide, stored up for
thee in heaven !"

SEEKING.

“AND where, and among what pleasant places
Have ye been, that ye come again
With your laps so full of flowers, and your faces
Like buds blown fresh after rain?”
“We have been,” said the children speaking
In their gladness, as the birds chime,
All together—“we have been seeking
For the Fairies of olden time ;
For we thought they are only hidden,
They would never surely go
From this green earth all unbidden,
And the children that love them so ;
Though they come not around us leaping,
As they did when They and the World

Were young, we shall find them sleeping
 Within some broad leaf curled ;
For the lily its white doors closes
 But only over the bee ;
And we looked through the summer roses,
 Leaf by leaf, so carefully ;
But we thought, rolled up we shall find them
 Among mosses old and dry ;
From gossamer threads that bind them
 They will start like the butterfly,
All winged : so we went forth seeking,
 Yet still they have kept unseen ;
Though we think our feet have been keeping
 The track where they have been,
For we saw where their dance went flying
 O'er the pastures snowy white,
Their seats and their tables lying
 O'erthrown in their sudden flight.
And they, too, have had their losses,
 For we found the goblets white
And red in the old spiked mosses,
 That they drank from overnight ;
And in the pale horn of the woodbine
 Was some wine left, clear and bright :

But we found," said the children, speaking

More quickly, "so many things,
That we soon forgot we were seeking ;

Forgot all the Fairy rings,
Forgot all the stories olden

That we hear round the fire at night,
Of their gifts and their favours golden,

The sunshine was so bright ;
And the flowers—we found so many,
That it almost made us grieve
To think there were some, sweet as any,

That we were forced to leave ;
As we left, by the brook-side lying,
The balls of drifted foam,
And brought (after all our trying)
These Guelder roses home."

"Then, oh !" I heard one speaking
Beside me soft and low,

"I have been, like the blessed children seeking,
Still seeking, to and fro ;

Yet not, like them, for the Fairies,
They might pass unmourned away
For me, that had looked on angels,
On angels that would not stay ;

No ! not though in haste before them
I spread all my heart's best cheer,
And made love my banner o'er them,
If it might but keep them *here* ;
They stayed but awhile to rest them ;
Long, long before its close,
From my feast, though I mourned and prest them,
The radiant guests arose ;
And their flitting wings struck sadness
And silence ; never more
Hath my soul won back the gladness
That was its own before.
No ; I mourned not for the Fairies
When I had seen hopes decay
That were sweet unto my spirit
So long ; I said, ' If they,
That through shade and sunny weather
Have twined about my heart,
Should fade, we must go together,
For we can never part !'
But my care was not availing,
I found their sweetness gone ;
I saw their bright tints paling ;
They died ; yet I lived on.

“ Yet seeking, ever seeking,
Like the children, I have won
A guerdon all undreamt of
When first my quest begun.
And my thoughts come back like wanderers,
Out-wearied, to my breast ;
What they sought for long they found not,
Yet was the Unsought best.
For I sought not out for crosses,
I did not seek for pain ;
Yet I find the heart's sore losses
Were the spirit's surest gain.”

THE KISS.

“ She died young ! ”

“ I think not so ; her infelicity
Seemed to have years too many.”

WEBSTER.

I COME to thee from one
Thou knowest of, I bear to thee her kiss:
“ No bitter words,” she said, “ when I am gone
Give thou, but only this.”

The mouth was well-nigh cold
I took it from, yet hath it power to bless :
The lips that sent it never moved of old
Except in tenderness ;

And ere they ceased to stir
They trembled, as if then they strove to frame
A word,—the only one 'twixt heaven and her,—
Methought it was thy name.

They wore unto the last
A calm, sad, twilight smile, from patience won ;
Her face had light on it that was not cast
From joy's long-sunken sun.

She waited for a word
Of Love to stay on ; Hope did long endure ;
She waited long on Time, for she had heard
His spells, though slow, were sure.

She waited ; but her stroke
Was heavier than her groaning ; one by one
All failed her ; Grief was strongest, so it broke
Each thing it leaned upon.

She waited long on God,
And He forsook not ; through the gloomy vale
She leant upon His staff, until His rod
Brake forth in blossoms pale.

Then did her spirit bless
The gracious token ; then she saw the rife
Salt-crusted standing pools of bitterness
Spring up to wells of life.

And Peace, a friend for years
Estranged, stood by her on her dying bed :
See that thou weep not o'er her grave, *her* tears
Have long ago been shed.

She grieves not for the mould :
A heavier load lay long upon her breast
Than Earth, which hath been to her far more cold
In waking than in rest !

WHEN THE NIGHT AND MORNING MEET.

IN the dark and narrow street,
 Into a world of woe,
Where the tread of many feet
 Went trampling to and fro,
A child was born—speak low !
When the night and morning meet.

Full seventy summers back
 Was this ; so long ago,
The feet that wore the track
 Are lying straight and low ;
Yet hath there been no lack
 Of passers to and fro.

Within the narrow street
 This childhood ever played ;
Beyond the narrow street
 This manhood never strayed ;
 This age sat still and prayed
Anear the trampling feet.

The tread of ceaseless feet
 Flowed through his life, unstirred
By waters' fall, or fleet
 Wind music, or the bird
Of morn ; these sounds are sweet,
 But they were still unheard.

Within the narrow street
 I stood beside a bed,
 I held a dying head
When the night and morning meet ;
And every word was sweet,
 Though few the words we said.

And as we talked, dawn drew
 To day, the world was fair
In fields afar, I knew ;

Yet spoke not to him there
Of how the grasses grew,
Besprent with dewdrops rare.

We spoke not of the sun,
Nor of this green earth fair ;
This soul, whose day was done,
Had never claimed its share
In these, and yet its rare
Rich heritage had won.

From the dark and narrow street,
Into a world of love
A child was born,—speak low,
Speak reverent, for we know
Not how they speak above,
When the night and morning meet.

THE SOUL'S PARTING.

SHE sat within Life's Banquet Hall at noon,
When word was brought unto her secretly,
"The Master cometh onwards quickly ; soon
Across the Threshold He will call for thee."
Then she rose up to meet Him at the Door,
But turning, courteous, made a farewell brief
To those that sat around. From Care and Grief
She parted first : "Companions sworn and true
Have ye been ever to me, but for Friends
I knew ye not till later, and did miss
Much solace through that error ; let this kiss,
Late known and prized, be taken for amends ;
Thou, too, kind, constant Patience, with thy slow,
Sweet counsels aiding me ; I did not know

That ye were angels, until ye displayed
Your wings for flight ; now bless me !” but they said,
“ We blest thee long ago.”

Then turning unto twain
That stood together, tenderly and oft
She kissed them on their foreheads, whispering soft,
“ Now must we part ; yet leave me not before.
Ye see me enter safe within the Door ;
Kind bosom-comforters, that by my side
The darkest hour found ever closest bide,
A dark hour waits me, ere for evermore
Night with its heaviness be overpast ;
Stay with me till I cross the Threshold o’er.”
So Faith and Hope stayed by her till the last.

But giving both her hands
To one that stood the nearest,—“ Thou and I
May pass together ; for the holy bands
God knits on earth are never loosed on high.
Long have I walked with Thee ; thy name arose
E’en in my sleep, and sweeter than the close
Of music was thy voice ; for thou wert sent
To lead me homewards from my banishment

By devious ways, and never hath my heart
Swerved from Thee, though our hands were wrung
 apart

By spirits sworn to sever us; above
Soon shall I look upon Thee as Thou art."
So she crossed o'er with Love.

November 12th, 1851.

RECONCILIATION.

“ But when in the other world love meets love, it will not be like Joseph and his brethren, who lay upon one another's necks weeping: it will be loving and rejoicing, not loving and sorrowing.”—*Baxter's “Saints' Everlasting Rest.”*

OUR waking hours write bitter things
Against us on Life's wall ;
But Sleep her small soft finger brings,
And draws it through them all.
Oh ! sweet her kiss on tired eyes,
More sweet to make amends
Her child-kiss on the soul that lies,
And sayeth, “ Come, be friends ! ”
One is there I have loved so long
And deep, I know not when
I loved her not with Love too strong
To change its *now* to *then* ;

But Love had been with Love at war,
And bitter words had been,
And silence bitterer by far
Had come our souls between ;
But now she came to me in sleep,
Her eyes were on my soul :
Kind eyes ! they said, " And didst *thou* weep,
And *I* did not console ?
Look up, and be no longer sad !"
She called me by my name :
Our spirits rushed together, glad
And swift as flame to flame ;
And all the sweetness from my life
Crushed out, and all the bloom
That wasted through those years of strife,
And faded on their gloom,
Came back together : as of old
She clasped me, then I knew
(And spoke not, stirred not), fold by fold
Our hearts together grew :
Then said I, as in whisper soft,
" We two have died, and this
Is joy that saints have told of oft,
The meeting and the kiss."

Such bliss, forgiving and forgiven,
Ran through me while I slept,
To find the ties that Earth had riven
Above were sacred kept ;
And yet I knew it was not Heaven,
Because I wept !

GONE.

ALONE, at midnight as he knelt, his spirit was
aware

Of somewhat falling in between the silence and the
prayer,

A bell's dull clangour that hath sped so far, it faints
and dies

So soon as it hath reached the ear whereto its errand
lies ;

And as he rose up from his knees, his spirit was
aware

Of Somewhat, forceful and unseen, that sought to
hold him there ;

As of a Form that stood behind, and on his shoulders
 prest

Both hands to stay his rising up, and Somewhat in
 his breast,

In accents clearer far than words, spake, "Pray yet
 longer, pray,

For one that ever prayed for thee, this night hath
 passed away ;

"A soul, that climbing hour by hour the silver-shining
 stair

That leads to God's great treasure-house, grew covet-
 ous ; and there

"Was stored no blessing and no boon, for thee she
 did not claim,

(So lowly, yet importunate !) and ever with *thy*
 name

"She linked—that none in earth or heaven might
 hinder it or stay—

One Other Name, so strong, that thine hath never
 missed its way.

“This very night within my arms this gracious soul I
bore

Within the Gate, where many a prayer of hers had
gone before ;

“And where she resteth, evermore one constant song
they raise,

Of ‘ Holy, holy,’ so that *now* I know not if she prays ;

“But for the voice of Praise in Heaven, a voice of
Prayer hath gone

From Earth ; thy name upriseth now no more ; pray
on, pray on !”

HAUNTED GROUND.

“ It is the soul that sees.”

THE rest have wandered on—

Stay thou with me, dear friend, awhile, awhile ;
The air is full of voices, leading on,
As o'er enchanted isle.

This ground is writ all o'er

With the soul's history ; I may not choose,
Spell-bound, but pause above this living lore
To linger and to muse.

We give of what we take

From life of outward things ; our spirits leave,
Where they have been, a glory in their wake
More bright than they receive.

And this was once my Home :

The leaves, light rustling o'er me, whisper clear—
"The sun but shines on thee where thou dost roam,
It *smiled* upon thee here." *

And these are of the things

That God hath taken from me, safe to keep :
Sometimes, to let me look on them, He brings
Them to me in my sleep ;

And I have been in sleep

So oft among them, *now* their aspect seems
The vague soft glow evanishing, to keep,
Of half-remembered dreams.

Thou shouldst have been with me

Of old, dear friend, as now ! and borne a part
In all that was, then Life were filled with thee
As wholly as the Heart !

Then hadst thou won mine eyes

My soul to look through ; half it angers me
To think a sweetness on the years can rise
That is not mixed with thee !

* The idea that the sun shines on us in absence, but smiles on us at home, is borrowed from a German Song.

Yet stoop with me to trace

These olden records, overrun with bloom ;
The Dead are underneath, and yet the place
Looks hardly like a tomb.

This is the wood-walk ; oft

I feel a clasp detaining, not the fold
Of clinging bindweed, far more close and soft ;
For here in days of old,

My earliest friend with me

Walked hand in hand ; we sat long hours upon
This bank ; and I am on the earth, but she
Had wings, and she is gone.

See ! see ! the ancient hall

With sunset on it ! Now the windows flame
In evening light—they flash and glitter all—
And one looks still the same

As when my mother kept

Upon me, while I played, an eye of love ;
Since then, it oft has watched me while I wept,
Still watching, *from above !*

As then she used to smile,
And softly stroke my head ; so now my heart
These gentle memories stroke and soothe—awhile,
Awhile we will not part

Kind shadows ! from the door,
At noon-day with a joyous shout flung wide,
I see the merry children rush, before
Its welcome stroke had died.

The old domestic, grey
And bowed with weight of many years, whose look
And grave kind smile still followed on the way
Our flying footsteps took ;

Such wealth was his in store
Of loving words, when fain he would be stern,
And chide our rovings, all his speech the more
To tenderness would turn !

As twilight brings a face
Drawn faint, yet perfect, on the darkening wall ;
So on me rise the spirits of each place,
Yet bring not gloom withal.

Heaven's wasted wealth, the gold

It gave for treasure slighted, and ungraced ;
Earth's kindly seeds of love on soil too cold,
Let darkly run to waste,

That needed but our care

To bloom for ever round the heart serene ;
These, these the forms of evil things that were,
Of good that might have been,

Time gathers silently,

Yet from their ashes troubling phantoms sends
More stern than these of happy hours gone by,
Than these of buried friends ;

More sad than these that smile

And whisper, " Now thou comest as a guest
Where once thou dwelt, yet mourn not thou the while,
Because thou hast been blest ! "

POETS.

ONE spake to a Poet, "And whence hast thou
won

The key to the melodies vagrant that run
And throb along Nature's strong pulse, like a strain
That haunts us by snatches, yet doth not attain,

Save in thee, to completeness :

The wind-song, the bird-song, the song of the leaves,
The heart-song which breathes through them all, and
receives

E'en in giving them sweetness ? "

Then he answered, "From God, who to each at His
will

From His fulness gives somewhat the yearning to still
Of the soul, that as yet He designs not to fill ;

For He would not that any should tax Him and say,
'Thou gavest me nought as I went by the way
To joy in and bless Thee.'"

And His gifts are *all* blessed ; He giveth to some
Rich boons ; they are happy, and so they are dumb,—
There was Silence in Heaven ;
And the strength and the loving, to gaze on each thing
That they have not, with joy in its beauty, and sing,
To some He hath given.

These sit in their gladness, all robed and all crowned,
As guests at Life's banquet, while swift circles around
Life's rosy joy-bringer :
But a banquet needs music, so *these* in the cold
Stand singing without ; though his harp be of gold,
Wilt thou envy the singer ?

For one (was it *one* then ?) went forth from the crowd,
A warrior, chosen, and faithful, and vowed ;
Sore-wounded, they found him
With a bright-blazoned banner wrapt round him, and
prest
To his bosom, to stanch its deep death-hurt ; none
guessed

That his life-blood welled over it darkly, so proud
Was the purple that bound him.

Ye sit by the hearth in the cold, bright spring weather,
At evening, and hear the birds chiming together ;
And ye say, " Happy singers ! " forgetting the trees
Are leafless, and keen winds hold back beyond the
seas

The swallow, blithe comer ;
Yet Summer is coming for us as for these,
A long Summer.

A COMPARISON.

THERE is no Winter in the soul of Man ;
 Its clime is Tropical, a giant tree
In stately Southern forests blowing free
And broad, it stands where equal Summer sways
All seasons, and as one swift joy decays,
Another pushes forth a fan-like frond
Or succulent leaf dark-shining far beyond
Before it falls ; and wing-like thoughts have sown
Their seeds all round about its roots, and thrown
A veil of living blooms from bough to bough,
Leaf, flower, and tendril twining, so that now
Most vain it were to track each home, or guess
Whence springs this weight and wealth of loveliness ;
While e'en its cloven bark, a sheath and shroud
Of splendour, blossoms o'er,—so fancies crowd

Within the soul, so mounting swift and high
Up to that tree's tall summit, suddenly
Spring in one night efflorescent, bright hopes,
That drop again to earth like flowery ropes
Let down from Heaven by angels' hands ; yet there
Stand forth, 'mid all that fulness, gaunt and bare,
Like matted cordage, withered coils that fruit,
Or flower, or leaf, bear never, for the root
From whence they drew earth's kindly juice is gone ;
And these are hopes that die, yet still cling on !

THE ETERNAL NOW.

“ For one day with Thee is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”

“ **N**OW have I won a marvel and a Truth ;”
So spake the soul and trembled, “ dread and
ruth

Together mixed, a sweet and bitter core
Closed in one rind ; for I did sin of yore,
But this (so said I oft) was long ago ;
So put it from me far away, but, lo !
With Thee is neither After nor Before,
O Lord, and clear within the noon-light set
Of one illimitable Present, yet
Thou lookest on my fault as it were now.
So will I mourn and humble me ; yet Thou

Art not as man, that oft forgives a wrong
Because he half forgets it, Time being strong
To wear the crimson of guilt's stain away ;
For Thou, forgiving, dost so in the Day
That shows it clearest, in the boundless Sea
Of Mercy and Atonement, utterly
Casting our pardoned trespasses behind,
No more remembered, or to come in mind ;
Set wide from us as East from West away :
So now this bitter turns to solace kind ;
And I will comfort me that once of old
A deadly sorrow struck me, and its cold
Runs through me still ; but this was long ago.
My grief is dull through age, and friends outworn,
And wearied comforters, have long forborne
To sit and weep beside me : Lord, yet Thou
Dost look upon my pang as it were now !”

CONSOLATION.

“They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. . . . Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician *there?*”—JER. viii. 11, 22.

YEA! trouble springs not from the ground, yet
must it ever be,

Man knows that he is born to care, so seeks his
remedy;

And he hath found out store of charms and spells to
give it rest,

Yet grief turns from human comforters, the Highest
is the best!

One saith, “Be comforted, for grief is idle and is
vain,

It never hath brought back the smile to Joy’s dead
face again,

It only fixes there the look it wore when Hope took
leave ;”

“ Yes, grief *is* vain, I know it well, and *therefore* will
I grieve.”

One saith, “ Be comforted, for thus how many say
with dawn,

‘ Would God that it were eve ! ’ at eve, ‘ Would God
that it were morn ! ’ ”

But then more noble in its woe spake out the grieving
heart,

“ Nay ! rather would I all were blest, and bear alone
my smart.”

“ And yet,” saith one, “ be comforted, for grieving is
a sin ;

Thy tears may* stain Heaven’s goodly floors, yet there
be trodden in ;

This is a grief that Heaven hath sent, a grief that thou
must bear,”

And Patience smiled so cold, so cold, I took her for
Despair !

* Malachi ii. 13.

Yet these were simple reasoners ; I said, “ I will arise,
I will seek out counsel from the sage and wisdom
from the wise ;

They shall show me of their merchandise who trade
for hidden things,

Who go down to the heart's great deep to track its
secret springs.

Then with calm brow, one answered me in measured
tones and brief,

That we are stronger through our pain, and nobler for
our grief,

And when I looked on him, I saw he spoke what he
believed,

And I talked no more of grief to him who ne'er him-
self had grieved,

Or he had known that spoke of Will, how vain its
strong control

When Deep is calling unto Deep within the wave-tost
soul ;

Yea ! happy are they that endure ! yet never was the
tide

Of nature's agony stemmed back by high, o'ermaster-
ing Pride ;

But then with kindlier mien, one said, "Go forth unto
the fields,
For there, and in the woods, are balms that nature
freely yields :
Let Nature take thee to her heart ! she hath a boun-
teous breast,
That yearns o'er all her sorrowing sons, and She will
give thee rest."

But Nature on the spirit-sick as on the spirit-free
Smiled, like a fair unloving face, too bright for sym-
pathy ;
Sweet, ever sweet, are whispering leaves, are waters in
their flow,
But never on them breathed a tone to comfort human
woe !

Small solace for the deer that hath the arrow in its side,
And only seeks the woods to die, that o'er his
dappled hide
Spread purple blooms of bedded heath, and ferny
branchings tall,
A deadly hurt must have strong cure, or it hath none
at all ;

And the old warfare from within that had gone on so
long,
The wasting of the inner strife, the sting of outward
wrong,
Went with me o'er the breezy hill, went with me up
the glade,
I found not God among the trees, and yet I was
afraid !

I mused, and fire that smouldered long within my
breast brake free ;
I said, " O God, Thy works are good, and yet they
are not THEE ;
Still greater to the sense is that which breathes
through every part,
Still sweeter to the heart than all is He who made
the heart !

I will seek Thee, not Thine, O Lord ! for (now I
mind me) still
Thou sendest us for soothing not to fountain, nor to
hill ;
Yet is there comfort in the fields if we walk in them
with Thee,

Who saidest, "Come, ye burdened ones, ye weary,
unto ME."

Yet is there comfort, not in Pride that spends its
strength in vain,
But in casting all our care on Thee—on Thee who
wilt sustain ;
Not in dull Patience, saying, "This I bear, for it
must be,"
But in knowing that howe'er Grief comes, it comes to
us from Thee !

Thou, Lord ! who teachest how to pray, O teach us
how to grieve !
For Thou hast learned the task we find so hard, yet
may not leave ;
For Thou hast grown acquaint with Grief—Thou
knowest what we feel,
Thou smitest and Thou bindest up, we look to THEE
to heal !

PENCIL-MARKS IN A BOOK OF DEVOTION.

“It happened one day, about noon, I was exceedingly surprised with the print of a man's naked foot on the shore, which was very plain to be seen in the sand.”

STRONG words are these, “O Lord, I seek but Thee
Not Thine! I ask not comfort, ask not rest;
Give what, and how, and *when* thou wilt to me—
I bless Thee: take all back—and be Thou blest.”

Sweet words are these, “O Lord! it is Thy love
And not Thy gifts I seek; yet am as one
That loveth so I prize the least above
All other worth or sweetness under sun.”

And all these lines are underscored, and here
And there a tear hath been and left its stain,
The only record, haply, of a tear
Long wiped from eyes no more to weep again ;

And as I gaze, a solemn joy comes o'er me,
By these deep footprints I can surely guess
Some pilgrim by the road that lies before me
Hath crossed, long time ago, the wilderness.

With feet oft bruised among its sharp flints, duly
He turned aside to gather simples here,
And lay up cordials for his faintness—truly
Now will I track his steps and be of cheer.

And wearied, by this wayside fountain's brink
He sat to rest, and as it then befell,
The stone was rolled away, he stooped to drink
The waters springing up from life's clear well.

And oft upon his journey faring sadly
He communed with this Teacher from on high,
And meeting words of promise, meekly, gladly,
Went on his way rejoicing—so will I !

“FAINT, YET PURSUING.”

A SONG OF THE CHURCH MILITANT.

ALL day among the corn-fields of the plain,
Reaping a mighty harvest to the Lord,
Our hands have bound the sheaves ; we come again,
Shout for the garners stored !

All day among the vineyards of the field,
Our feet have trodden out the red ripe vine :
Sing ! sing for hearts that have not spared to yield
A yet more purple wine !

All day against the spoilers of our land,
Our arms made bare the keen and glittering sword ;
None turned back, none stayed the lifted hand,
Sing ! sing unto the Lord !

All day beset by spies, begirt with foes,
Building a house of holiness ; by night
We watched beside our weapons ; slow it rose,
Sing ! sing from Zion's height !

ENTREAT FOR ME.

TO E. F.

ENTREAT for me, for thou hast ever stayed
Within the Father's house ; thine eyes serene
Have followed on Him there, while I have strayed,
And in far distant lands a wanderer been.

Thou needest not to seek Him, and arise
To go to Him, for on thy lip and brow
The shadow of a blest communing lies,
That tells, dear friend, that thou art with Him *now*.

"Son, thou art ever with me," robe and ring,
The greeting tear, the reconciling kiss,
Were for the Prodigal's return ; each thing
I have is thine," oh, blest enough in this

Art thou, that freely from the Father's store
Mayst take at will of all His goods increase
For thy heart's solace ; mine that hungered sore
Hath still to crave for pardon, still for peace.

I would not dare an earthly wish to speak ;
Yet is there this one boon : I come to thee
Because I am not bold enough, I seek
A messenger approved, entreat for me !

So wayward children, through a dearer child,
Would win some wished-for favour, pleading thus,
"Go to our Father, thou art good and mild,
Less often hast thou grieved him, ask for us !"

A VISION OF GREEN LEAVES.

THE time was Winter, Winter or the Spring
That comes with tardy footstep, lingering
Like some reluctant Giver, yielding cold
The boons that it no longer may withhold ;
And ere I slept, I listened to the rain
Dashed by the fitful wind against the pane,
The wind, that even through my sleep did seem
To break upon the music of my dream,
With pause of change and dreariness, and still
Swelled, sighed, and moaned each varying scene to fill
With trouble and unrest ; at length outworn
I slept within my sleep, and to the Morn
(Still in my dream) awoke, with vacant eye
Forth from the casement gazing listlessly,

When sudden I exclaimed, "A miracle !
A Summer come at once, without a Spring
To herald it ! a bright awakening
To life and loveliness," for all around
Were leaves, green bursting leaves, and on the ground
Was short grass springing thick, and through the wave
The dark flag cut its swift way like a glaive ;
And broad as Orient growths, upon the pool,
Large, juicy leaves lay mantling, smooth and cool :
I saw no flowers, no fruit, but everywhere
Leaves, only leaves, that filled the summer air
With murmurs, soft as whispers that the heart
Hath longed and listened for : while light and low,
As chidings fall from lips that turn their flow
To gentleness, quick rustlings waved apart
The boughs, and fragrance soothed the sense like
thought
Too sweet for utterance ; e'en then I caught
The Dream's full import : "'Tis the Spring's warm
sigh,"
Methought, " that calls forth all this luxury
Of leaf and greenness ; thus, upon the heart
A word, a look will bid a Summer start,
A Summer come at once, without a Spring

To herald it, a sudden waking ;”
Then from the bands of sleep my spirit broke,
And with the sweetness on my soul I woke,
And it was Winter still ! but in my heart
Was Summer ! Summer that would not depart,
But breathed across its silence, low and light,
Like those sweet forest-rustlings of the night ;
It was a dream of Hope ! and sent by Her
My Lady bright, because I minister
Unto her honour, while I strive to sing
And praise her with my Lyre’s most silver string ;
It was a dream of Hope ; I know the hue
Of her fresh mantle, and her symbol true,
The leaf ! she cannot give the flower or fruit,
But sends their promise by a herald mute ;
The leaf, that comes like one in haste to bring
The first of all some gladsome welcoming,
And cannot speak for joy, but with the hand
Still points and beckons to the coming band ;
I know the symbol, and I bind the sign
Upon my heart to make it doubly thine,
Thou Bringer of sweet dreams by day and night,
Still will I sing and praise Thee, Lady bright !

And I will gather of these leaves, to twine
A chaplet for those sunny brows of thine ;
And by thy smiling Thou wilt keep its sheen,
In Winter as in Summer fresh and green !

TO A LONG-PARTED FRIEND.

THOU comest back unto me like a ghost ;
And all the years that have been buried long
In silence, at thy aspect, crowd and throng
Each portal of my mind—a Phantom host.
Now we will commune with that cloud-like train
Awhile, then send them to their rest again ;
For all their forms are pale and colourless ;
Not from their full Joy-vintage could we press
The wealth of this day's gleanings ! nay, the woes
That we have known since then have nobler shows,
And all their “more” sounds feebler than our “less.’

We parted in the blossom and the bud,
Now in the bloom-time of Life's perfect Rose
We meet ; and though it may not yet uncloset

Each petal, for that earth lies ever cold
About its roots, and in their conflict rude,
Rough, biting winds have bowed its head, and strewed
Some leaves upon the ground ; yet hath it won
From shower and shining, from the moulds and sun,
Deep colours, odours richer than of old !

The rocks that lock the Vale's monotony
In quiet, once our mutual vision spanned ;
Since then by distant pathways, painfully
We have been climbing both, now hand-in-hand
Together on the steep ascent we stand,
And see the spot where then we parted lie
Beneath us like a speck ; now through the haze,
Disparting for a moment, we will gaze
Down on the Alpine hamlet, till we hear
Its songs and sheepfold tinklings rising clear,
Then lift an upward heaven-aspiring eye
Together, ere our tracks break suddenly,
And we go onwards through the cloud and mist
Alone, yet cheerful ! on the Hill, dear Friend,
Ere evening-light its cold white brow hath kissed,
Tingeing its snows with rose and amethyst,
Once more those far-diverging lines may blend !

“SO IT HAPPENS.”

FROM THE GERMAN OF EMANUEL GEIBEL.

“**H**E loves thee not,” so spake they to her cold ;
“He trifles with thee ;” then she bowed her
head,

And down her cheeks, like dew from roses, rolled

The tears fast welling at each word they said ;

Oh ! why did she believe ? for when he came

Her doubtings angered him ; a semblance light

He held through all, he spoke and smiled the same,

And waited—waited to weep through the night !

Still knocked a better angel at her heart,

“ Yet is he true, give, give thy hand again ; ”

Still felt he, through that bitterness and smart,
 " She loves thee yet, she loves thee now as then ;
Speak but one word, hear but one greeting kind,
 So is the spell that lies betwixt you broken."
Once more they met ; oh ! Pride is harsh and blind,
 That word, that only word remained unspoken.

So parted they, and as within the choir
 Of some great Minster, wanes the altar-light
To duller red, then flashes fitful fire
 All quivering restless, then sinks down in night ;
So love died in them, long and sore bewept,
 Called back again with yearnings vain, at last
Forgotten, till within each heart it slept,
 With old illusions faded and o'erpast.

Yet oft-times started they, when moonlight streamed,
 Up from their pillows that were wet with tears,
And wet with tears each face, for they had dreamed
 I know not what ; then thought they of the years,
The old, the lovely time that once had been,
 And of their idle doubts, their broken troth,
And all that now was set their souls between,
 So wide, so wide—O God, forgive them both !

THE PICTURE AND THE SCROLL.

“ Oh, mes amis ! lisez-vous quelquefois mes vers ; mon âme y est empreinte.”

A BRIDE looked long upon her picture : “ Thou
Art left among the things I held most dear,
A dearer love is calling me ; yet now
These to my heart have never been so near ;
And I shall not be by when they are gay ;
They will be sad, and I shall be away ;
Yet Thou wilt look upon them night and day,
As once I looked, so now I leave upon
Thy silent lips a kiss to bide away ;
Smile on them, smile on them when I am gone ! ”

A Singer looked in silence on a scroll,
Her eyes were dark with eloquent fire, her soul

Smiled through them bride-like, yet the hand was cold
That locked her slender palm within its hold,
And set the spousal wreath upon her brow ;

She said, " I go from all that has been dear,
For dearer love is calling me ; yet now

These to my heart have never been so near,
So will I leave my kiss this scroll upon,

That they may find it, while I whisper clear,
' Smile on them, smile on them when I am gone ! ' "

TO A YOUNG GIRL.

TWELVE years before thee through life I must
run,

Dearest ! oh, would I might counsel the hours,
Saying, " Keep back your best sunshine for one
That is coming behind me, and spare her the
showers ! "

Fain would I stop to remove from thy way
Stones that have bruised me, and thorns that have
grieved ;
Set up my errors for waymarks, to say,
Here I was wounded, ensnared, or deceived !

Vain is my wishing ! in lines of our own

We must traverse the pathway marked out from
above ;

Life is a sorrowful teacher, alone

We must learn its deep lessons, unaided by love.

Yet where I journey waste places among,

I will scatter a seed by the wayside, and say,
Soft to myself as I hasten along,

“ It may be a flower when *she* cometh this way ; ”

Yet will I leave thee some token, that there,

Just where the path looks most rugged and dim,
It haply may cheer thee, in meeting with Care,
To know that thy friend walked before thee with
him !

So for thy loving and trusting and truth,

Gentle acquittance in part it may be ;
Thou who hast shrined me an image of Youth,
Brighter than ever my youth was to me !

February 13th.

A SONG OF MEMORY.

HERE it was I saw her last :
When the farewells all were said,
Through the garden speeding fast,
She o'ertook me breathless, led
By some gentle after-thought,
That she spoke not yet, but smiled
As I stooped to set me free
From a wild-briar clinging, " See,
This kind weed to stay thee sought,
Yet wilt thou break from it and me ;"
Then she clasped me, smiling still
Through the shining of a tear,
" Come and go, dear friend, at will,
Comfort still thou leavest here ;

Should the future days bereave,
Never with a chiding sore
Can the bygone bid us grieve
That we loved not in them more !”

So we parted where we stood
In the ancient gateway ; then
As I hurried down the wood,
Once I turned to look again
Where she stood, in life and bloom,
With the summer sunshine kind
Streaming round her, in the gloom
Of the massive arch enshrined :
To her feet the shadows crept
From the grey and ruined stone,
And her form from out them swept
Like an Apparition thrown
On the sunny air, the light
Smote her forehead, even now
Bides that vision in my sight
With the halo on its brow !
Even so, within my heart,
Ever young and fond and fair,

Stands she in her shrine, apart
From the ruins round her there ;
Glides her image through its gloom
In a quiet track of light,
As within a darkened room
Soft a straggling sunbeam falls
On the ceiling, on the walls,
Finding nothing else so bright !

Dark the castle stands above,
Dark the river onward floweth,
Murmuring as one that knoweth
Somewhat of my grief and love.
Nay ! the river nothing knoweth,
Ever floweth, ever speedeth,
Nothing heedeth as it floweth,
Of all my heart hath missed and needeth ;
Murmur, murmur, still unknowing,
Murmur, murmur, in thy flowing,
None the less will fond believing
Link thy chiding with my grieving.
Since we walked beside thy stream,
Oft 'mid summer musings lost

I have dreamed a deeper dream ;
 She a deeper stream hath crossed,—
Crossed it singing ! once of old
Dark and swift that river flowed
Sunless, to an unknown sea ;
And the nations shivering stood
On the margin of the flood,
Sorely pressed behind, before
Lay a dim and doubtful shore ;
Till a Helper, at the cry
Of a world in agony,
With a garment dipped in blood,
Smote the waters as He passed
On a glorious errand ; fast
Hither, thither, backwards drew
All the sullen waves, and through
Came His ransomed ! King and Priest,
 Sage and warrior, virgin mild,
And the Slave from bonds released,
 And the mother with her child,
From the greatest to the least,
Crossed it singing ! but to me,
As I watched that company,

Strong and beautiful and bold
Seemed they all, and I was weak,
And the river still was cold,
And the country far to seek !
But since Thou didst leave my side,
Following after, with my tear
Still upon thy cheek undried,
Seems the river far less wide,
And the hither shore more near :
Ever more that shore was dear
For the sake of one unseen,
So He shows me it more clear
By the light of what had been ;
For like lichen on the stone,
Ever round each well-known thing
Still this heart of mine hath grown,
Firm to fix and close to cling :
So God beckons by a Hand
I have clasped, unto His land ;
So He bids its Dawn arise
On me, through belovèd eyes ;
So the new, unearthly song
Seems a strain remembered long ;

With the angel voices blend
Tones familiar, seraphs wear
Looks I loved on earth ; oh, friend,
Kind companion, *Thou* art there !

TO JOSEPHINE.

AN APOLOGY.

I THOUGHT of Shakspeare saying long ago,
That forms were but devised to set a gloss
On hollow welcomes, making up the loss
Of kindness, with their faint, unreal show,
When Thou to give me greeting didst upraise
Thy gracious head, bowed ever lowly down
As if thou didst incline to meet thy crown
Of Blessing, and of Favour and of Praise ;
Then looking for the first time in Thine eyes,
My soul rushed up to thine, and did disclaim
All set approaches, swift to recognize
Its kindred—and I called thee by thy *name* !

THE MARRIAGE OF TRUE MINDS.*

" *Endure and dare*, true heart, through Patience joined
With boldness come we at a crown enriched
With thousand blessings.' —*From the Spanish of Argensolas.*

I.

AGNES AT HER WINDOW.

MY window looks upon a dead blank wall,
Yet flowers that grow beyond are kind, and
send,
As friend might soothingly to prisoned friend,
Their kisses blown upon the wind, to call

* The annals of the heart are rich and various, extending over a wide region, yet it would be hard, among all its written or traditionary wealth, to find a sweeter true-love story than that contained in the lyrical autobiography of *Vicira, the Lusitanian*,

A summer round me in my cell, where all
Breathes of the rose and jessamine that blend ;
And struggling o'er, yet more to make amend,
A Vine hath run, and on my side let fall
Some leaves and tendrils, chequering the dull stone
With verdurous gloom ; e'en like such gracious
bough
Hast thou, O Love ! thy goodly branches thrown
O'er our Life's dreariness ; grieved and hated Thou
By this world's archers, yet Thou dost abide
In strength, firm rooted on the other side !

the famous painter and faithful husband. This poem, which was given to the world at the age of eighty-one, three years before the author's death, is so remarkable in all respects, as to have been considered by Southey the best book Portugal has to boast of. It is full of extraordinary incident, and celebrates the passion which, beginning before either of the lovers was eight years old, forms, in its mutual strength and constancy, at once the marvel and the glory of the two lives it bound together.—*See on this subject an article in Blackwood's Magazine for March, 1851, "The Fine Arts in Portugal."*

II.

THE SERENADE.

Last night, as Thou thy wonted round didst make,
Belovèd watcher, sore I chid the wind,
When citron scents were wooing it, to take
Thy sweetness from me, leaving theirs behind !
For ever, though my very soul did wake
To catch that broken music, tenderness
Was fain to fill its pauses with a guess !

And "Oh, my prisoned jewel"* (so I strove
To bind these links, the breezes' envious dole
In one), thou calledst me "thy star, thy dove,
Thy rose, thy angel, treasure of thy soul !"
These words came fitfully, the strain passed by ;
Then from these scattered fragments Love and I
Sat down to frame one bright mosaic whole !

* "Tesouro imprisonado."

Thou callest me thy Rose !

O that indeed I were

A white rose—dewy fair,

Or ruby-red—that glows

On India's fervid air ;

For then would I enclose

My fragrance shut within thy heart, and dwell

As lives the flower's quick spirit in the cell

It floods with sweetness, sweetness never knowing

Loss for the bounty of its overflowing !

Thou callest me thy Pearl !

O that indeed I were

A bright pearl gleaming fair,

A white pearl in its quivering lustre, yet

Faint-shining like a tear, a tear that met

With comfort ere it fell, and trembling hung

Awhile, all round and glistening, where it sprung ;

Then would I fall and lie,

Belovèd, in thy cup dissolving slow

At Life's great banquet, and thou shouldst not know

What gave thy wine the tinge of ecstasy !

O that indeed I were

A star, a jewel rare,

A soft snow-plumaged dove,
An Angel from above ;
Thou sayest, "*These* are mine,"
And hast but one poor heart ; yet love,
Love on, and all are thine !

III.

AGNES AMONG THE SISTERS.

I sit among the sisters—moments make
Their way to hours as slowly, day by day
Creeps lagging on, as if before them lay
Some evil Thing they feared to overtake ;
Our fingers move together swift, but slow
And few the words that fall, like drops that ooze
From springs that in the desert long ago
The drifting sands sucked in ; full oft I choose
To hearken if some echo subterranean
Tells where life's hidden streams in darkness yet
Flow on ; but all is silent, and again
I look and see each face before me set,
A dial-plate with mosses long o'ergrown,
And finger that still duly round the stone
Moves on to point to nothing ; then I thank
My own, if it from theirs hath caught this blank
Impenetrable aspect, and so lies

A scroll outspread, yet locking from their eyes
(Though writ within, without) the precious lore
They would but shrink from ; yet my heart runs o'er
With pity and with love, for these were made
For noble creatures, that within the shade
Kept by man's fraud, and cheated of their right
In the Great Father's heritage of light
And warmth, have shrunk to mildewed forms like
these ;

So will they die, methinks, and never know
What life was made of, till they pass above
To sun themselves for ever in the Love
Whose blessed reflex they have missed below.

And in the stillness oft my fancies please
To frame similitudes, as like a pall
This silence wraps our spirits, one and all ;
Yet theirs, methinks, is Polar silence froze
Unto the centre ; snows piled up on snows
'Mid icy seas where glimmer to the moon
Cold shapeless forms, and wrecks that to and fro
Drift aimless on ; but like a Torrid noon
Is mine, begirt with stillness like to death,
Where large-leaved flowers upon the burning air

Hang motionless, and drink its fiery breath ;
And every beast lies couched within its lair,
And bird with folded wing ; yet listen ! there
A pulse beats audibly, a murmur rife
Above, beneath, this sultry hush profound
Is quickening on the sense, and at a sound
Will flash and kindle, all instinct with Life !

IV.

And oft upon me is the fancy borne—

(Wild wish, whose wayward longing doth but prove
How this poor heart, with anxious throbbings worn,
Hath need of rest from all things, e'en from love !)

To cross those icy barriers that wreath

Betwixt these sisters' souls and mine ; to see
How it fares with them on the heights, and breathe
The cold, clear air of their serenity ;

For thought o'er-peoples all this life of mine,

So would I leave it for one moment, free

From hope, fear, rapture, yea, Beloved, from **THEE**.

One moment ! *could* I thus indeed resign

A fraction of my troubled wealth, my bliss

So dearly won ? I trow not ! and in this

I seem like some proud courtier bowed and bent

With weight of honours, that beside his road

Sees nested 'mid thick leaves some low abode ;

" There," sighs he, "*there* is peace and calm content,"

Yet would he deem its quiet—banishment !

WITHOUT AND WITHIN.

ONCE spake a grey-haired poet: A noble thing
and good,

To strike a heat adown the chain of our great brother-
hood ;

To send the blazing torch of truth from eager hand to
hand,

To bid thought's swift electric wire vibrate from land
to land.

To nurse a generous seed that in the mind hath taken
root,

Then waft it forth on kindlier soil to come to nobler
fruit,

By fire-lit hearth, in love-lit heart, a heritage to
claim ;

This have men called an idle breath, the vanity of
Fame !

But as to champing steed the noise of battle from afar,
That bids him paw the ground, and neigh to trumpet-
sound, Ha, ha !

Is Fame to poet-soul, and mine hath shared among
the rest ;

Yet was the praise of earliest days the sweetest and
the best !

And it is with me now as when with keen, ambitious
breast,

At school I struggled with my mates, and ever fore-
most pressed ;

Yet knew not what I won—the worth or sweetness of
my prize,

Till I took it home, and read them both within my
mother's eyes !

My mother ! She to whom I read my earliest rude
essays,

Who pinned my verses in her gown, and on her
household ways,

As she kept moving, to herself she said them over
soft ;

I had a True-love afterwards that read them not so
oft !

And He, the kind old bachelor, whose heart had been
for one

Too much, and so he shared it out with all beneath
the sun,

I see his broad and honest brow, the sparkle in his
eye

(A steadfast fire undimmed by age), I hear his slow
reply.

The patientest of anglers he, and I the quietest
Of dreamy boys, true comrades we,—he chose me
from the rest ;

Content to saunter by his side in silence through the
day,

Through coppice and by stream, the while my thoughts
were far away,

Perhaps with Crusoe in his isle ; our noonday meal
we took

Beneath an old grey lichened rock that beetled o'er
the brook ;

Then with our tongues set free at last ! not learning
much nor wit

Went with our simple fare, but talk as well that seasoned it.

I never hear a chafing brook, nor see the smooth
stones lie

Beneath it golden-brown, or mark the mailed dragon-
fly

Shoot past, but something o'er my soul a summer
feeling sends,

That brings my good old kinsman back, and all my
boyhood's friends.

One still is left, the friend that fought my battles out
at school ;

Now would he fight them with the world, if ever it
should cool

To verse of mine—yes, inch by inch contending : not
a line

He reads, but takes them all on trust, content that
they are mine.

Now have I made me store of friends, the kindred of
my mind ;

They give unto me of their wealth, I pay them back
in kind :

The world needs music at its feasts, it bids me wel-
come free ;

It loves me for the songs I sing, but *these* loved my
songs for me !

And so to such as these my heart flies back, a thing
set free ;

It craveth more than doth the mind, less cold
equality ;

Love is the one true leveller below, he bringeth down,
He raiseth up, he sets on all his chosen brows a
crown :

For He hath gold enough, enough of sweetness in his
tone

To lend an echo unto Fame far deeper than its own ;
Its hollow cymbal-sound is gone, and hushed its
selfish din,

When praising from Without is met by loving from
Within.

MADANA.

THE invisible Madana (or Kama), the Hindu Cupid, is armed with a bow of Sugar-cane, strung with bees, and five arrows, each tipped with a flower exercising a peculiar and distinct influence on the heart; among these, *one* alone of fatal and unerring flight is headed, and the head covered with honey-comb.

SUMMER ! Summer ! soft around,
With a hushed and dream-like sound,
From a beating heart that knows
Too much rapture for repose,
Breathless, tremulous, arise
Murmurs ; thick mysterious sighs ;
Whispers, faintly wandering by,
Breathe a warning out and die ;
Lightly o'er the bending grass,
Changeful gleams and shadows pass ;

Through the leaves a conscious thrill
Lightly runs, and all is still ;
Like the tree* whose branch and stem
Flame with many a sudden gem,
Blushing in its haste to greet
Touch of Beauty's slender feet ;
Earth with inner joy opprest,
Shaken from her central rest,
Through her bursting bloom reveals
Hidden ecstasy she feels :
Now the rich, unfolding Rose
Through its crimson splendour glows ;
Jasmine blossoms manifold
Shed their stars of paly gold ;
On the lake's broad bosom borne,
Reddening to the reddening dawn,
Flashes many a floating cup
Raised to drink the sunbeams up ;
Drooping on the heavy air
Faint with sweetness that they bear,
Now the Mango buds grow pale
O'er their passion-breathing tale ;

* The red Asoka, supposed to blossom when its stem comes in contact with the foot of a beautiful woman.

And the Champak's leaves disclose
Where, amid their vestal snows,
Kindling at deep gleaming eyes
Fiery-hearted fragrance lies ;
Summer ! Summer ! now the air
Trembles—MADANA is there !
Watch not for his flitting wing,
List not for the bounding string,
Floating 'mid the groves to choose
Gorgeous blossoms, mingled hues,
Viewless as the viewless wind,
Weaving spells for heart and mind,
Flower-armed, flower-crowned Deity,
Light his unseen arrows fly !
Tremble not ! the archer's smile
Plays but carelessly the while
Summer lightning o'er the sky
Flashing, flickering restlessly ;
Sporting with the passing hours,
He hath winged their flight with flowers ;
Gentle witchery and brief,
He hath breathed o'er bud and leaf,
That hath lent to glance and tone
Light and sweetness not their own ;

And as these shall fade away,
Will the pleasant charm decay,
Droop, and leave no trace behind
Where its clasping tendrils twined,
Fading, fleeting, like the sigh
Of some wandering melody ;
Like a blissful dream that flings
Light upon the coming day,
Like a bird whose gorgeous wings
Glitter as it flits away ;
So they vanish ! yet the heart,
Ere its gentle guests depart,
Links a thought for after hours,
Summer ! to thy songs and flowers !

Yet beware the hidden power,
Madana hath yet his hour :
These were but the chords that thrill
Lightly to a master's will,
Tones, his wandering fingers fling
Breeze-like from the trembling string,
Ere he call forth all the fire,
All the passion of the Lyre,

Ere he stir through one deep strain
All the founts of joy and pain ;
One full chord is yet unshaken,
One wild note hath yet to waken,
One keen arrow yet to fly,
Tremble ! Madana is nigh !
O'er the fatal shaft is thrown
Sweetness all the archer's own ;
For his strength in sweetness lies—
Sweetness, that through gentle eyes
(E'en in gazing half withdrawn)
Sheds upon the soul a dawn ;
Sweetness lingering in a word,
Softly uttered, faintly heard,
Yet within the heart to dwell,
Treasured deep in many a cell,
Long with haunting echoes rife,
When the sounds have died to life ;
From that subtle arrow's might,
Vain is wisdom, vain is flight !
Vain the charmer's boasted spell
Mightier charms than his to quell ;
Groves of sandal and of balm
Yield no soothing, yield no calm,

Though their odorous branches shed
Fragrant tears upon thy head,
Vainly o'er thine aching brow
Droops the incense-breathing bough,
Not the cooling * Lotus leaf
Gives to hurt like thine relief ;
To thy throbbing temples prest,
Bound upon thy burning breast ;
Vainly ! still through pulse and vein
Glow the dull unceasing pain ;
Vainly, vainly ! still the smart
Rankles in thy stricken heart.
Therefore from the earth a sound,
Hushed, and dreamlike, and profound,
Gathers—warning whispers rise,
Murmurs thick, mysterious sighs !
Therefore all the haunted air
Trembles—Madana is there !

* The flower and leaf of the lotus are used by Hindu writers as the type of all grace and beauty, and they suppose the latter to possess a peculiar efficacy in allaying mental disquietude.



VALENTINES AND SONGS.

“ For Lovers' eyes more sharply-sighted be
Than other men's, and in dear Love's delight
See more than any other eyes can see.

.

But they who love indeed, look otherwise
With pure regard and spotless true intent,
Drawing out of the object of their eyes
A more refined form, which they present
Unto their mind void of all blemishment:
Which seeing now so inly fair to be
As outward it appeareth to the eye,
And with the spirit's proportion to agree,
Love thereon fixeth all his fantasie,
And fully setteth his felicitie,
Counting it fairer than it is indeed,
And yet indeed its fairness doth exceed!

SPENSER'S *Hymn in honour of Beauty.*

L U I S A.

“ Just like Love is yonder Rose,
Heavenly sweetness round it throws,
And in the midst of briars it blows,
Just like Love !”

CAMOENS.

I STOOD at eve upon the furrowed shore
With One, that as the tide its legions filed
Unto our feet, stooped down, and o'er and o'er
Wrote on the sand that only name, and smiled
The stern, self-mocking smile joy owns no more
To see the waves efface it. “Far more slow,”
He said, “are Time's dull waters in their flow
To wear away that name where it is writ
And graven deep, as with a pointed gem
Upon the rock ; yet vain to cancel it
All else, so must I leave it unto them !

This name, that I in weakness of self-scorn,
With idle finger have dishonoured thus,
Fair-written once in letters luminous,
Was shut and clasped within my heart's great Book
For ever, as I deemed ! rude hands have torn

Those pages from my life, but Memory
Hath kept them, yet for sadness scarce can brook
Within that rifled volume now to look,
Or shut its golden clasps without a sigh !

THE SUMMER FRIEND.

TO C. M.

“ It was not in the winter
Our loving lot was cast ;
It was the time of roses,—
We plucked them as we passed.”
HOOD.

YES! ever with the Summer,
As flies across the sea
The Spring's first blithesome comer,
My thoughts fly swift to thee !
For they were wove of sunbeams,
The ties that hold us fast ;
It was Summer when I saw thee first,
And when I saw thee last !

And short and bright as Summer
Our meetings still have been,
(Enough, enough of Winter
Hath ever come between !)
Till with a doubling sweetness
Thy smile is now a part
Of Summer, Summer on the earth,
And Summer in the heart !

Still come, dear friend, in Summer,
That I may keep thee twined
With all its warm and golden gifts,
For ever to my mind !
Yet come, dear friend, in Winter,
To prove what half my heart
Hath guessed, that it is Summer still,
My Summer where THOU art !

February 13, 1851.



“QUI SAIT AIMER, SAIT MOURIR.”

“ I BURN my soul away !”

So spake the Rose and smiled ; “within my cup
All day the sunbeams fall in flame, all day
They drink my sweetness up !”

“ I sigh my soul away !”

The Lily said ; “all night the moonbeams pale
Steal round and round me, whispering in their play
An all too tender tale !”

“ I give my soul away !”

The Violet said ; “the West wind wanders on,
The North wind comes ; I know not what they say,
And yet my soul is gone !”

Oh, Poet, burn away

Thy fervent soul ! fond Lover at the feet
Of her thou lovest, sigh ! dear Christian, pray,
And let the world be sweet !

THE BROKEN CHAIN.

CAPTIVES, bound in iron bands,
Half have learned to love their chain,
Slaves have held up ransomed hands,
Praying to be slaves again :
So doth custom reconcile,
Soothing even pain to smile,
So a sadness will remain
In the breaking of the chain.

But if chain were wove of flower,
Linked and looped to sister free,
With a Name and with an Hour,
Running down its Rosary,

Light as gossamers on green,
By their shining only seen ;
Would not something sad remain
In the breaking of the chain ?

But if chain were woven shining,
Firm as gold and fine as hair,
Twisting round the heart and twining,
Binding all that centres there
In a knot, that like the olden
May be cut, yet ne'er unfolden,
Would not something sharp remain
In the breaking of the chain ?

A VALENTINE.

I SAID to one I loved, "Why art thou sad?"

And he made answer, "There hath been a tune
Long floating round my brain ; morn, night, and
noon,

With inarticulate cadence making glad,

Yet vexing me, because I could not find

Words sweet enough to set to it, and bind

Its music round about my heart for aye.

Till, musing late above an ancient book,

The window being open, breezes fleet

Lifted the rare old page, and sudden shook

A loose leaf, writ with song, unto my feet :

In these quaint words methought lies hid the key

To all those cadences faint struggling round,

Now will I wed them to that melody,
And set my life to music by their sound ;
E'en so I practised them upon my lute
Early and late, yet found they would not suit
Together, though so sweet ! and all the strain
Broke into discords ! still the strain goes on,
But only angers me, its meaning gone ;
Nor will I seek to find it words again !

February 13.

A VALENTINE.

TO C. M.

ONE said to me, "To-day
I go where I perchance may meet thy Friend,
What shall I take from thee?" I answered, "Nay,
Nought have I left to send,

"For she hath all of mine
Already ! only giving of her store,
A little miser ! through her usury fine
To draw on mine the more !

"More fit that she send back
What she hath won of me ; but it were vain,
What once hath been with *Her* will seek the track,
The wonted track, again !"

February 13.

“ ICH DIEN.”

SHE spake to him—that woman with a brow
Most like a Queen's, “ With all the sovereignty
That I was born to, crown and sceptre, now
My soul hath parted ; be thou true to me.
Fain had I brought thee all ; but vassal's vow
And bended knee were but for *One* ; e'en so,
All state I may not share, I would forego ! ”

“ Once dwelt I in a Palace of Delight,
A lonely castle on enchanted seas ;
Its hundred doors stood open day and night ;
My thoughts gold-banded, honey-laden bees,
Passed to and fro for traffic ; now all these
That I have slighted (like true friends of yore
Left for a stranger's smile), return no more.

“And *I* may not return to them, or stand
Among them as in olden days, when well
They stored my treasure-caverns, for my hand
Hath lost its wonted gesture ; and the spell,
Through murmuring *one* name this chance befell,
That gave those treasure-chambers to the clay,
Hath passed, forgotten, from my mind away !

“So let it pass ! it were a thought too bold
Within my grasp to keep these empires twain,
And living in two Worlds, the New and Old,
To serve in one, and in the other reign !
Would now that all mine ancient fair domain,
To spirits calm and free I might resign,
To take their joy in it, as I in thine !”

Her words were high, yet like proud music shook
From straining chords that in their vibrant fall
Break over it, her faltering accents took
Them all in humbleness ; she did recall
No gift for vaunting that had given *all*
For All or Nothing ? pleading mournfully,
“ I love, I serve,—oh, be thou true to me !”

THE BABES IN THE WOOD.

A LOVER'S DREAM.

SO dreaming sad and true,
He deemed he saw two outcast children rove ;
Oft had he nursed them fondly, so he knew
Their faces—Hope and Love !

And ever farther North,
Such heavy doom lay on them through some sin
And sorrow not their own, they wandered forth,
And none did take them in.

The wild wind round them strewed
Brown whirling leaves, and sighed amid its play,
While ever deeper in the wintry wood
Their small feet went astray.

Yet smiling as they sung

 Their little songs, they held each other's hand,
And cheered each other onwards in a tongue
 None else might understand.

They fed each other kind,

 For slender food these gentle Babes require,
With here and there a berry, left behind
 On ragged thorn or brier.

And closer, as the dew

 Fell dank, unto each other's side they crept ;
And closer, closer to each other drew
 For warmth, before they slept ;

For by some law, these two

 Together born, together linked for aye,
Could only die together ! so they knew
 What time their hour drew nigh.

And oft amid the chill

 They woke, and listened for each other's breath,
And felt a pulse beat feebly ; all was still,
 And yet it was not Death !

“Still, Brother, thou art warm,”

They whispered to each other ; till its fold
Relaxing languidly, each little arm
Grew stiff, and both were cold.

No pious Robins there

Brought leaves, but smitten with a late remorse,
A pitying Spirit of the upper air
Wept kind above each corse ;

And from undying bowers

Shook on those Children, buried in the snow,
Sweet buds and blossoms of the very flowers
They played with long ago !

HOME.

TWO birds within one nest ;
Two hearts within one breast ;
Two spirits in one fair
Firm league of love and prayer,
Together bound for aye, together blest.

An ear that waits to catch
A hand upon the latch ;
A step that hastens its sweet rest to win,
A world of care without,
A world of strife shut out,
A world of love shut in.

THE SUMMER ROSES.

(Imitated from the old German song, "Röschen auf der Haide," in Herder's Collection.)

ROSES, roses, summer roses,
Shall I pluck you from the thorn?
Shall I leave you there till through you
Autumn breezes rustling, strew you
On the earth forlorn,
Roses, summer roses?

Answered then the summer roses,
"He who plucks the rose will find,
As his grasp upon it closes,
That the thorn is left behind :

Through its sharpness still must sweetness
Of the rose be brought to mind,
Roses, summer roses !”

So I plucked the summer roses,
And the cruel thorn I met ;
Soon the sweetness of the roses
Made me all its wound forget ;
But the roses, oh, the roses
Bloom and breathe around me yet,
Roses, summer roses !

IMITATED FROM THE TROUBADOUR
SORDEL.

HER words, methinks, were cold and few ;
 We parted coldly ; yet,
Quick-turning after that adieu,
 How kind a glance I met !
A look that was not meant for me,
 Yet sweeter for surprise,
As if her soul took leave to be
 One moment in her eyes :
Now tell me, tell me, gentle friends,
 Oh, which shall I believe,
Her eyes, her eyes that bid me hope,
 Her words that bid me grieve ?

Her words, methinks, were few and cold :

What matter ! Now I trust,

Kind eyes, unto your tale half-told,

Ye speak because ye must !

Too oft will heavy laws constrain

The lips, compelled to bear

A message false ; too often fain

To speak but what they dare ;

Full oft will words, will smiles betray,

But tears are always true ;

Looks ever mean the thing they say :

Kind eyes, I trust to you !

Her looks were kind—oh, gentle eyes,

Love trusts you ! Still he sends

By you his questions, his replies,

He knows you for his friends.

Oh, gentle, gentle eyes, by Love

So trusted, and so true

To Love, ye could not if ye would

Deceive, I trust to you !

THE SINGER.

From a Provençal Poem of the Ninth Century.

HOW thick the grasses spring
In May ! how sweetly ring
The woods with song of many birds ! the note

That is of all most sweet,
Most varied, most complete,
Comes from a little bird of slender throat,

The Nightingale, that sings
Through all the night, and flings
Upon the wood's dark breast her sweet lament.

What ! little bird, dost seek
To conquer with thy beak
The lyre's full ringing chords ? be well content :

A Minstrel to thy song
Long listened, lingering long ;
A Prince a moment paused upon his way :

"Sweet, sweet !" they said, and then
Passed onwards, while again
Broke from the topmost bough thy thrilling lay.

What ! thinkest thou to chain
The world ? thou dost but strain
Thy slender throat, forgetful of its need,

Thou carest but to sing :
Yet who is found to bring,
To stay thy want, a berry or a seed ?

They praise thy song, and yet
They pass thee, and forget ;
None feedeth thee save He who gave thy strain.

Oh ! wilt thou prolong
Thy sweet, thy mournful song,
Unwearied, while the world to sleep is fain !

.

When Summer comes, unstirred
Are all the leaves, the bird
Is silent, while her callow young are tended.

When Winter comes, the leaves
Fall off, and no one grieves ;
The singer dies, her little song is ended !

November, 1862.

FOUR SONGS.

Set to Music by the Author.

TO L. A. C.

OH, hast thou won my heart, my love !
What gain to thee ? what gain ?
It plights thee with no golden ring,
It decks thee with no chain ;
A simple thing, yet it will bring
To thee, my love, no pain ;
To give thee rest, to make thee blest
It hath been ever fain, my love,
It hath been ever fain !

Oh, have I won thy heart, my love ?

What gain to me ! what gain !

What brooding calm, what soothing balm,

What sweet release from pain !

Through sudden rest my spirit guessed

What hour to me it came,

And day by day I mark its stay

Through comfort of the same, my love,

Through comfort of the same !

TO MARIA IVANOVNA.

I F dark be she I love, or fair,
I ask not now ; I do not seek
With her the lily to compare,
To find the rose upon her cheek.
Such flowers as these grow everywhere ;
With all things soft, and dusk, and rare
I liken her ; the woodbine feels
And finds her way with touches light ;
She keeps her hold with tendrils slight.

How close, how kind the woodbine steals !
The summer air is warm with bliss
All stolen from the woodbine's kiss.

Sit thou by me when eve has stilled
And soothed the day's quick pulse to rest ;

Let none be near us while we build
 Within each other's hearts a nest,
Of joys that fade, of youth that flies,
Of love that stays, of memories
That pass not with the passing day :
Sit thou by me ; be sad, be gay,
So sweet thy smiles, so sweet thy sighs,
So soft thy clasp, so kind thine eyes.
Be what thou wilt, 'tis ever best ;
Be what thou art, and I am blest !

IF IT BE PLEASANT TO REMEMBER
THEE.

IF it be pleasant to remember thee,
What is it, then, what is it to forget thee?
But for a space, one moment's space to be
As though I ne'er had loved, or known, or met thee?
My soaring soul on some high quest to send,
On some stern task to bind my strength's endeavour,
Then, like the bird, with rapid wing descend
Upon the nest that is my own for ever.

By some sweet song, by some dear dream to be
Upon my lonely way entranced, o'ertaken;
Awhile, awhile to cease to think of thee,
Then in the sweetness of thy soul to waken!

Sweet dream, with day pass not away,
As once in hours when all my joys were fleeter ;
Dear haunting lay, I bid thee stay,
And in my heart for evermore grow sweeter.

If still to bear thee in my mind be sweet,
What is it then, what is it then to lose thee ?
In play with life to let the moments cheat
My steadfast heart that flies again to choose thee ?
Afar, I see thee lift thy soul in prayer,
I see thee in thy quiet ways abiding ;
Oh, sweet to me hath grown the common air,
To me, for whom the Rose of life is hiding !

I SPAN BESIDE OUR CABIN DOOR.

(Adapted from an ancient Irish Song.)

I SPAN beside our cabin door,
I watched him slowly cross the moor,
I smiled as I will smile no more,
Eskadil, mavourneen slawn !

How many an evening as I sat,
With father he would come to chat,
He came for this, he came for that,
Eskadil, mavourneen slawn !

I watched him o'er the moor so wide,
He took the path that turned aside
I went within the house and cried,
Eskadil, mavourneen slawn !

I saw him pass our cabin door ;
The world is wide, he came no more ;
I wept as I will weep no more,
Eskadil, mavourneen slawn !

I drew my wheel beside the fire,
I span as if I span for hire,
My father talked, and did not tire,
Eskadil, mavourneen slawn !

My heart is weary and my head,
And all is done, and all is said,
And yet it is not time for bed,
Eskadil, mavourneen slawn !

A SONG.

(Set to music by Mrs. Tom Taylor.)

KISS me before I sleep,
Oh gentle child, oh loving child ! that so
My spirit, ere it sinks within the wide
Dim world of shrouded dreams, unsatisfied,
And seeking ever, unto Thine may grow,
Nor stir, nor move, nor wander to and fro ;
Kiss me before I sleep !

Kiss me before I wake,
Oh loving child, oh child beloved, that so
The sweetness of thy soul, thy smile, thine eyes,
May meet my spirit on its way to take
The chill from off this life of ours, and make
A world more kind and warm wherein to rise ;
Kiss me before I wake !

AMID CHANGE, UNCHANGING.

THE Poet singeth like the bird that sitteth by the
rose,

While dews are chill, and on the hill the first faint
sunbeam glows ;

While through the buds' thick-folded green the first
red rose-streak shows,

Sing, Poet, sing of Hope and Spring,

Still sing beside thy rose !

The Poet singeth like the bird that sitteth by the rose,
While on the golden summer noon her golden heart
o'erflows ;

And now she waxeth red, now pale, yet ever is the
rose,

Sing, Poet, sooth of love and youth,
Still sing beside thy rose !

The Poet singeth like the bird that sitteth by the rose,
When from the drooping stalk her brief sweet glory
earthward goes,
And the red is kindling on the leaf that fadeth from
the rose,
Sing, Poet, sing, remembering,
Still sing beside thy rose !

ONE FLOWER.

“FAREWELL, my flowers,” I said,

The sweet Rose as I passed

Blushed to its core, its last

Warm tear the Lily shed,

The Violet hid its head

Among its leaves, and sighed.

“Oh thou, my flower, my pride,

Sweet Summer’s sweetest bride,

The rest are fair, but dear

Art thou, hast thou no tear,

What givest thou?” “The whole,”

The glowing Pink replied,

“Blush, tear, and smile, and sigh I gave

In giving thee my soul.”

“The summer, wandering by,
Hath breathed in thee her sigh,
Hath wooed thee from the South,
With kisses of her mouth ;
Hath wooed thee from the West,
Hath blest thee with the best

Warm blessings of the sun ;
And yet a heavy dower
Is thine, my joy, my flower,
Thy soul hath burst its sheath,
Oh, is it love or death,

Sweet flower, that thou hast won ?
Oh, is it love or death
That breathes from this thy breath,
That kindles in thine eye ? ”

Then won I for reply,

“ *I have made sweet mine hour ;*
As dies the flower, I die,
I lived as lives the flower.”

A SCHERZO.

(A Shy Person's Wishes.)

WITH the wasp at the innermost heart of a
peach,
On a sunny wall out of tip-toe reach,
With the trout in the darkest summer pool,
With the fern-seed clinging behind its cool
Smooth frond, in the chink of an aged tree,
In the woodbine's horn with the drunken bee,
With the mouse in its nest in a furrow old,
With the chrysalis wrapt in its gauzy fold ;
With things that are hidden, and safe, and bold,
With things that are timid, and shy, and free,
Wishing to be ;

With the nut in its shell, with the seed in its pod,
With the corn as it sprouts in the kindly clod,
Far down where the secret of beauty shows
In the bulb of the tulip, before it blows ;
With things that are rooted, and firm, and deep,
Quiet to lie, and dreamless to sleep ;
With things that are chainless, and tameless, and
proud,
With the fire in the jagged thunder-cloud,
With the wind in its sleep, with the wind in its
waking,
With the drops that go to the rainbow's making,
Wishing to be with the light leaves shaking,
Or stones on some desolate highway breaking ;
Far up on the hills, where no foot surprises
The dew as it falls, or the dust as it rises ;
To be couched with the beast in its torrid lair,
Or drifting on ice with the polar bear,
With the weaver at work at his quiet loom ;
Anywhere, anywhere, out of this room !

RAPTURE.

LIGHT at the full of the harvest moon,
Heart of the rose in the heart of June,
Song of the bird when its song takes wing,
Breath of the blossomed furze in spring,
Kiss of the angel that comes when dreams
Are more sweet than all sweetness that is or seems,
Fire in the cloud of the opal burning,
Fall of a footstep at eve returning,
Clasp of a hand that thrills to the soul,
Bliss of a spirit that wins its goal !

A SONG.

A LITTLE cloud that hung, my love,
So low 'twixt earth and sky,
Too sad it seemed for earth, from Heaven
Afar, yet ever nigh ;
And oft it longed on Earth's warm breast
To fall in kindly rain,
And oft, on morn or evening's crest
To leave a crimson stain ;
Yet fell not, rose not, till a bright,
Keen arrow pierced it through,
All fleecy thin, all milky white,
All golden clear it grew ;
What could it do but fade, my love,
And melt into the blue ?

A little wind that hid, my love,
Beside the water's edge,
And shook a music unforbid
From out the withered sedge,
And whistled o'er the dreary moor,
And round the barren hill,
And sighed at many a fastened door
And darkened window-sill,
And through the forest whirled and swept,
When leaves fall wearily,
And o'er the lake's cold bosom crept,
And moaned beside the sea,
Until between the sea and sky
It found a quiet cave,
All lined with mosses soft and dry,
Afar it heard the sea-bird's cry,
Afar the restless wave ;
What could it do but die, my love ?
What could it do but die ?

THE BRIDGE.

NOON.

WE lingered on the rustic bridge,
We saw the pebbles in the stream
Below us, clear in amber light
Of noonday, flash and gleam ;
Afar, the yellow flag-flowers caught
A glory from the flitting beam,
And all was still and fair, methought,
And golden as a dream.

Oh, might this hour not pass away !
Oh, were it given to us, not lent !

And might we, framed within it, stay,
A breathing picture of content !
And hear the babbling waters run,
And hear the distant stock-dove coo,
And dream that in the world were none
But only I and you !

A PICTURE.

IT was in autumn that I met
Her whom I love ; the sunflowers bold
Stood up like guards around her set,
And all the air with mignonette
Was warm within the garden old ;
Beside her feet the marigold
Glowed star-like, and the sweet-pea sent
A sigh to follow as she went
Slowly adown the terrace ;—there
I saw thee, oh my love ! and thou wert fair.

She stood in the full noonday, unafraid,
As one beloved of sunlight ; for awhile

She leant upon the timeworn balustrade ;
The white clematis wooed her, and the clove
 Hung all its burning heart upon her smile ;
And on her cheek and in her eyes was love ;
And on her lips that, like an opening rose,
Seemed parting some sweet secret to disclose,
The soul of all the summer lingered ;—there
I saw thee, oh my love ! and thou wert fair.

THE SONG OF THE TROUBADOUR

PIERRE RAYMOND DE TOULOUSE.

“ Vergiers, ni flor, ni pratz,
No m'an fait cantador,
Mas per vos cui ador
Domna, m'sui alegratz.”

I KNOW the woods in spring, I know
The voices of the breeze and brook ;
I know the little flowers that look
With starry eyes upturned, and grow
Through all the rapture that the bird
Flings down, with quiet hearts unstirred ;
The joy above, the calm below,

The thrill that passes, and the slow,
Sweet stealing silence, these I know.

Yet more than these I know ; the light
 Upon the passing moment thrown,
That weights its bliss, yet wings its flight ;
 The look that makes two hearts alone,
 Two spirits to each other known,
 And all the world's wide clamour thrown
Afar, afar ! Yes ! all that dies
And lives 'twixt loving lips and eyes
Is known to me ! and would ye deem
I caught *this* music from the stream ?

Ye say my song is sweet ; I know
 My song is sweet ! Ye call me proud,
A careless-hearted singer, slow
 To gather praises from the crowd.
Yet praise me if ye will ! in cold
 Set phrase, with others standing by.
With gracious smile and voice unmoved,
One told me once that she *approved*

The strain I sang ; my looks were shy,
But from that hour my song grew bold ;
I saw her blush, I heard her sigh ;
Enough, enough, if so approved !

Oh ! softly as she spoke that word,
What songs it woke within my breast !
As when a warm wind from the west
Shakes all the summer thicket stirred
With breezy rapture and unrest :
Of all that gives delight I sing,
Of all that lightly comes and goes
In bud and bloom and withering
Of last year's flowers, of last year's snows ;
Of many a pleasant tale outworn
I sing ! of forest alleys green,
And lovers underneath the thorn
That met ; of many a maid forlorn,
And robber fierce, and wandering queen ;
Of knights upon a glorious quest,
And lovely ladies, long ago
Of each bold heart beloved the best,
And near the hearts that loved them, low

Long laid and lapped in quiet rest ;
I sing of banner and of crest,
Of lifted lance, of ringing shield ;
I sing the tourney's mimic field,
In crowded lists the shock, the stir,
I sing of her, I sing of her !

And if she loves me for my songs,
Or if she loves my songs for me,
I ask not ! idle question wrongs
Love's soul, from such vain surmise free.
If first the Bulbul sings, who knows,
Or first unfolds the crimson rose ?
The sweet bird sings, the sweet flower blows.
She loves, she loves my songs and me !



SONNETS.



ASCENDING.

THEY who from mountain peaks have gazed upon
The wide illimitable heavens, have said,
That still receding as they climbed, outspread,
The blue vault deepens over them, and one
By one drawn farther back, each starry sun
Shoots down a feebler splendour overhead.
So, Saviour ! as our mounting spirits, led
Along Faith's living way to Thee, have won
A nearer access, up the difficult track
Still pressing, on that rarer atmosphere,
When low beneath us flits the cloudy rack,
We see Thee drawn within a widening sphere
Of glory, from us farther, farther back,—
Yet is it then because we are more *near*.

LIFE TAPESTRY.

TOO long have I, methought, with tearful eye
Pored o'er this tangled work of mine, and mused
Above each stitch awry, and thread confused ;
Now will I think on what in years gone by
I heard of them that weave rare tapestry
At Royal looms, and how they constant use
To work on the rough side, and still peruse
The pictured pattern set above them high :
So will I set MY COPY high above,
And gaze and gaze till on my spirit grows
Its gracious impress ; till some line of love
Transferred upon my canvas, faintly glows ;
Nor look too much on warp or woof, provide
He whom I work for sees their fairer side !

LOVE BIRDS

IN A POLYTECHNIC EXHIBITION.

“For likely hearts composed of stars concent
Are these—whom Heaven did at the first ordain
And made out of one mould the more t’ agree ;
Love have they harboured since their first descent
Out of their heavenly bowers, where they did see
And know each other *here* beloved *to be*.”

SPENSER.

MINE eyes, ’mid all these wonders may not choose,
But fix on ye, meek pair, so closely prest
For warmth against each other, breast to breast,
Till all their green and golden couplets fuse,
And run in one the many-mingling hues,
Whereon your heads lie, drooped and sunk in rest,
With eyes half closed, yet straying never, lest
Their gaze its one accustomed object lose ;

Now do ye mind me of two spirits, cast
On life, 'mid all its strangeness new and old,
That having found each other out at last,
No longer rove, but mutually enfold
Soft plume with plume that blends and mingles fast,
The while they keep each other from the cold !

TO A REMEMBERED STREAM, AND A
NEVER FORGOTTEN FRIEND.

SWEET stream, the haunt of solitary hern
And shy kingfisher, far from busy town
Or even populous hamlet, winding down
Through banks thick fringed with underwood and
fern
And hazel thickets, where the ripe nuts turn
Unmarked and slow to Autumn's ruddy brown ;
Where gems thy single rock its feathery crown
(For nought of thine looks ever sad or stern !)
With berried scarlet of the mountain ash ;
I never hear 'mid waking dreams thy dash
Above the pebbles, but I think on One
Whose course of days hath by thy waters run,
A course like thine of calm and quietness,
Nor ever raised a voice except to bless !

TO ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

IN 1851.

I LOSE myself within thy mind—from room
To goodly room thou leadest me, and still
Dost show me of thy glory more, until
My soul like Sheba's Queen faints, overcome,
And all my spirit dies within me, numb,
Sucked in by thine, a larger star, at will ;
And hasting like thy bee, my hive to fill,
I "swoon for very joy" amid thy bloom ;
Till—not like that poor bird (as poets feign)
That tried against the Lutanist's her skill,
Crowding her thick precipitate notes, until
Her weak heart brake above the contest vain—
Did not thy strength a nobler thought instil,
I feel as if I ne'er could sing again !

TO ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

IN 1861.

I PRAISED thee not while living ; what to thee
Was praise of mine ? I mourned thee not when
dead ;
I only loved thee,—love thee ! oh thou fled
Fair spirit, free at last where all are free,
I only love thee, bless thee, that to me
For ever thou hast made the rose more red,
More sweet each word by olden singers said
In sadness, or by children in their glee ;
Once, only once in life I heard thee speak,
Once, only once I kissed thee on the cheek,
And met thy kiss and blessing ; scarce I knew
Thy smile, I only loved thee, only grew
Through wealth, through strength of thine, less
poor, less weak ;
Oh what hath death with souls like thine to do ?

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

TO D. E. L.

TOO full our hearts of sorrowful delight,
Of parting converse, that one night, I ween,
For dream of Midsummer or Fairies' Queen ;
As Thou sat'st near me, half in shade, half light,
The moonbeams touched thy forehead cold and white,
And Thou didst *peak in moonlight!* so serene
And soothing were thy words, and all thy mien,
Transparent as thy soul ! when swift and bright
(So did our talk the short-lived night beguile)
The sun broke in to bid us make an end
With his beginning ! Since that hour, dear friend,
I never think on Thee, so calm the while
Yet cheerful, but the sweetness seems to blend
Of moonlight and of sunlight in thy smile !

RESERVE.

NOW would I learn thee like some noble task
That payeth well for labour ; I would find
Thy soul's true Dominant, and thus unwind
Its deeper, rarer harmonies, that ask
Interpreting ; for like a gracious mask
Is thy calm, quiet bearing ; far behind
Thy spirit sits and smiles in sunshine kind,
And fain within that fulness mine would bask :
Set if thou wilt this bar betwixt thy tide
Of feeling and the world that might misknow
Its strength ; use ever with the crowd this pride,
“ Thus far, and yet no farther shall ye go ;”
But not *with me*, dear friend, whose heart stands
wide
To drink in all thy Being's overflow.

DREAMS.

“DOST thou believe in dreams?” I asked my
Friend ;

But then he answered quickly, “Would that I
Could learn that gentle Faith ! to certainty
Turn all that Hope dares faintly apprehend !
Then would Life’s richest colours meet and blend
Together, fused as in a Tropic sky
That hath no clouds ; then Life would utterly
For all its wrongful doings make amend ;

For Life hath brought me partings, but in Rest
Are only meetings ! for the waking hours
Have trampled in their flight upon my flowers ;
But Sleep’s kind hand still gathers them again
From bowers remote, and binds them on my breast,
I dare not stir for fear to break their chain !”

THE SOUL'S WOOERS.

LIKE Captive Judah, underneath the Tree
She sat alone and silent on the ground ;
While from the valley rising, came the sound
Of music and of dancing, gay and free,
But none did bid her to that company ;
Till lifting up her heavy lids, she found
One standing by her, winged, and rosy crowned,
And robed within the purple : “ Rise, for thee
(He said, and kissed her on the brow elate)
The Ruler of the Feast hath kept till now
The richest wine ;” but as she marvelled, drew
Another near, that whispered to her, “ Wait ;
Not of this vintage shalt thou taste till thou
Shalt drink it with Me in My Kingdom *new*.”

H O P E.

WHEN I do think on thee, sweet Hope, and how
Thou followest on our steps, a coaxing child,
Oft chidden hence, yet quickly reconciled,
Still turning on us a glad, beaming brow,
And red, ripe lips for kisses : even now
Thou mindest me of Him, the Ruler mild,
Who led God's chosen people through the wild,
And bore with wayward murmurers, meek as thou
That bringest waters from the Rock, with bread
Of angels strewing Earth for us ! like Him
Thy force abates not, nor thine eye grows dim ;
But still with milk and honey-droppings fed,
Thou leadest to the Promised Country fair,
Though thou, like Moses, mayst not enter *there* !

TO A FRIEND.

O H, call me but thy Friend !
Seek thou no other word when thou wouldst
pour

Thy soul in mine ; for this unto the core
Of Love doth pierce, and in it comprehend
All secrets of its lore !

Yet thou dost move within
A Tropic sphere of soul, and all too weak
For thy full-hearted utterance ; worn too thin
By daily usage seem the words we speak,
Too oft misprizing them ; so thou dost hold
This current coin of ours for base, and choose
From thine own wealth new moulds, wherein to fuse
Thy virgin, unsunned gold !
So let thy choice be free !
Our spirits thus by divers laws are bound,

One may not judge the other ; but from me
Seek thou no other token ! for its sound
Hath been to me for music ; bringing round
Kind eyes that looked on me, kind hands I found
Outstretched to help me over pathways drear ;
And some of these are far, and some are near,
And some are in the Heavens, but all are dear
In God, who gave them to me ; so this " Friend "
Is like a full-stringed chord, that still doth seem
Within its sound to gather up and blend
All, all that life in other lives that takes
Away Life's curse of barrenness, and makes
Our Being's sweet and often-troubled dream !

I never used it lightly ; unto me
A sacredness hung round it ; for a Sign
I held it of our common words that be
Initial letters of a speech divine :
Oh, take this coin, too oft to worthless ends
Profaned, and see upon its circlet shine
One Image fair, one Legend never dim ;
And Whose but Cæsar's ? for this word by Him
Was used at parting, " I have called you *Friends*."

TO L. M.

"La mia Sorella che tra buona e bella
Non so qual piu fosse."

SOFT eyes, soft hands, soft step, that with no sound
Hath glided to my side ; I know ye near,
Yet pause not from my task to look around
With lifted glance, for, Halcyon ! where'er
Thou buildest for awhile, an atmosphere
Of calm and quiet broods about thy nest ;
O thou belovèd inmate ! not a Guest
Art thou, in any house, in any heart,
For so thy presence makes itself a part
Of all, we feel it like an unexpressed
Sweet thought within the soul that gives it rest,
And needeth not to be in words confessed ;

So moving on as if some inner law
Of music graced thy steps, we only find
And feel thee in our lives, because we draw
An easier breath through mingling of so kind
And pure an element ! thy soul doth lose
No odour, yet around it still diffuse
A charm within whose concentration lies
The secret of thy strength ! oh, Rose full blown,
That wearest still the bud's soft grace, unstrown
Are all thy petals ; provident and wise,
Thou hidest from the day's too-curious eyes
The dews the morning gave thee, and dost fold
A leaf above thy heart, but with no cold
Reserve, for still its sweetness overflows.
I question now thy Future : on what breast
Wilt thou at length thy perfect bloom unclose ?
I know not, yet I know thou wilt be blest !

TO THE AUTHOR OF "ZISKA."

NOT like the Sophist, of his phosphor-light
Enamoured so, that he would blot out one
By one God's lofty candles, fain in night
To plunge the nations, so that for a sun
They come to bow before his counterfeit ;
And not like him of mocking smile, the dull
Cold Scorer, ill-content the heart to cheat
Of Heaven, but trampling out the Beautiful
From Earth, to make life's ruin more complete,
Art Thou, oh, erring Genius ! not for thee
Their high emprise, to drag Humanity
About the miry streets, and hold to scorn
This vesture God hath fashioned, God hath worn ;

Dry, hopeless hearts, dry, loveless, tearless eyes!

Thou Youth of lofty dreams, of generous prayers,
Come out from them, and better recognize

Thy place! thy lot can never be with theirs!
For speaking to the Father thou hast said,

"Give Thou to me, oh, give that I may share
With them that need, Thought's true and living bread,
Whereon the soul that feedeth hath to spare."

Then turning to thy brethren, taking up

Thy country's ancient war-cry, thou dost call
With Him, her blind old Chief, "I claim a Cup,

The Cup of freedom and of light FOR ALL;"
Oh, never be thy prayer, thy claim denied

Of God or Man, but as thy soul doth yearn
Mayst thou receive in measure far more wide
Than thou dost ask! thy thirst be satisfied

By waters wrung from out a fuller urn
Than thou dost dream of now:

Oh, goodly tree,
Though set so deep within the jungle-brake,
The trees that in God's garden* planted be
Might envy thee thy beauty! yet they take

* Ezekiel xxxi. 8, 9, 15.

A mourning up for thee, because the snake
Is gliding 'twixt thy roots ; with burning breath
These flowers of thine, of Loveliness and Death
Show forth the fearful spousals ; from the Vine
That hath thee in its clasp drops poison-wine.
Yet dost thou struggle upwards from this lair
Of doleful things, and even now the air
Of open heaven hath fanned thy topmost bough.
Lift higher o'er these under-growths thy brow,
And look on Jacob's tents that whitening lie
Within the sunshine ; hearken to the cry
That rises from among them : in their shout

For One, a Brother and a King, thy prayer
Doth meet its answer. Spirit, that through doubt
Hast kept thy hold on fervent Love, come out

From this dim shade, thy portion waits thee *there !*

R E S T.

THIS life hath hours that hold
The soul above itself, as at a show
A child, upon a loving arm and bold
Uplifted safe, upon the crowd below
Smiles down serene,—I speak to them that know
This thing whereof I speak, that none can guess
And none can paint,—what marks hath Blessedness,
What characters whereby it may be told?
Such hours with things that never can grow old
Are shrined. One eve, 'mid autumns far away,
I walked alone beside a river ; grey
And pale was earth, the heavens were grey and pale,
As if the dying year and dying day

Sobbed out their lives together, wreaths of mist
Stole down the hills to shroud them while they kissed
Each other sadly ; yet behind this veil
Of dreariness and decay my soul did build,
To music of its own, a temple filled
With worshippers beloved that hither drew
In silence ; then I thirsted not to hear
The voice of any friend, nor wished for dear
Companion's hand firm clasped in mine ; I knew,
Had such been with me, they had been less near.



LIBER VERITATIS.

PART FIRST.

"IN this book regard rather the affections than the expressions ; Love is the speaker throughout, and if any one wish to understand it, it must be by Love."—*St. Bernard on the Canticles.*

TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

THOU Mother stern and proud,
That carest not to hear about thy knee
The singing of thy children ; absently
Thou smilest on them, listening for the loud,
Quick crashing of thy chariot. What to thee
Is pastoral stop or reed ? thy thoughts are vowed
To tasks of might, and thou thyself wilt be
Thy Poet, finding in thy stormy tunes
Rough music, leaving on the rock thy runes
So dinted deep, no Bard hath need to tell
The triumphs of a march where chronicle
And deed are one. What carest thou for praise
Of gentle-hearted singers ! Thou wilt raise
The crown to thine own brows, and calmly claim
The Empire thou hast won ; as yet no Name
Is thine to conjure with, as in the days

When Giants walked on earth, a spell more clear
Is thine in thought, that makes an atmosphere
Where all things are gigantic ! portents vast
Loom round thy path, where good and evil cast
Increasing shadows that the Evening near
Foreshow ; as yet no Prophet doth appear
In all thy sons, and he among the rest
Most wise and honoured found, is but the Seer
That reads thy signs, interpreting the best !

TO AN EARLY FRIEND.

BENEATH the tree we played
Together, Thou and I ! the sunshine fell
Betwixt the boughs, and on our faces laid
A loving finger, marking, where it strayed,
A Dial for the hours, whose very shade

Was but a softened brightness, for the place
Wherein we dwelt was Eden ! Through the wild
The man must journey, yet methinks the child

Should stay within the garden ! with the Race
Should run the mortal's history, and trace
From those blest bowers its chequered chronicle !

We played beneath the Tree ;
We did not pluck the apple ; little taste
Was ours for fruit of knowledge ; little haste

To lift unbidden hands when ours were full
Of flowers and purpled berries, beautiful,
That grew around us ; but the apple fell
Beside our feet, and through its sight and smell
Instructed, now we good and evil knew,—
So must we bid that pleasant place Farewell.

Yet well for us that there
We dwelt awhile ! oh, well for us to make
Acquaintance soon with all things glad and fair ;
To have them for our earliest friends ! to take
These playmates to our bosoms ere more stern
Companions meet us, for they oft return
And hold us by the hand, and for the sake
Of Eden love us ! Now its Angel knows
Our faces through all change, and oft from far
Hath smiled upon us kind ; he will not close
The gate so surely, but that Love ajar
Hath held it for a space, and Dreams aside
Have turned the Flaming Sword, and been our Guide
O'er half-forgotten tracks ; and on the wind,
Like kisses blown upon it, greetings kind
Send whispers after us, to half recall
Half-presage glories, that no Primal Fall

Hath robbed us of ; for Heaven had been less near
Had we not gazed up to it through the clear
Calm eastern skies, that, waking or asleep,
Bent o'er us in our childhood like a deep
Unvexed, unfathomed sea, when it was Prayer
To know, that day and night upon us there
Our Father's eyes looked down ;

“ Our Father ! ” First
And last in Love's blest language ! we were nurst
Within Thy breast, Thy sapphire floor for roof
Was over us ; and now less far aloof
We view Thy awful throne, that then we played
Beneath Thy footstool, and were not afraid !

And well for me that there
We played together ! in my heart, thy Book
Beloved from olden days, thou wouldst not look
So oft or fondly, maybe, flung aside
With childish things, but for its margin wide
With pictures stored ! Yet now we will not take
This love of ours to pieces ; who would strew
A blossom, leaf by leaf, to learn it grew
As grow the flowers ? Now love me for the sake

Of blessed Eden ; if thou wilt, believe
Me fairer than I am ! it will not grieve
My soul to borrow of Thy wealth, and be
Attired in splendour that belongs to Thee :
Thou givest freely, for the heart is wise
And bountiful and rich ; with naked eyes
 It seeth never ; like a child that takes
Some thing of little price that nearest lies
 To be its treasure, well content it makes
From out its very joy its Paradise !

OLD LETTERS.

WITHIN an ancient hall,
Where oft I love to wander, once I found
An antique casket, that without a sound
Flew open quick, and as a Rose will fall
To pieces at a touch when overblown,
So was the floor around me thickly strown
With yellow leaves, the letters of the Dead :
Oh hands that wrote these words, oh loving eyes
That brightened over them, oh hearts whose prize
And treasure once were these, by Time made Heir
To this your sometime wealth, with pious care
I gather in my hoards ; for this is dust
Of human hearts that now I hold in trust,
And while I muse above it, spirits flown
Come back and commune with me, till the fled

Pale ink reveals two names that now have grown
Familiar to my soul, as I had known
And pitied them in Youth ; in parley soft
I win their secrets forth from them, and oft
Make question of their Past ! Did Love find rest
And fold its wing where it had made its nest
So warm and deep, or were these of the strong
And patient souls, condemned, though wedded long,
To serve for the other duteously, and wait
Upon a harsher Laban,—Life, that proves
With grievous, stern delays each heart that loves ?
O gentle spirits, all your lives on high
Are written fair, but mortal history
Is traced upon the sand that may not keep
The dint of wave, so quick the dash and leap
That follows on—a picture on the wall—
A name upon the stone—a leaf whose green
Less quickly fades, because it once hath been
Within the Dove's soft beak, and this is all.

I.

(Written in Cypher.)

I WRITE to thee in cypher, even so
 Doth not the heart write ever? being proud,
 It careth not to boast its wealth, nor show
 Where lie its precious things by speaking loud.
 And here, upon my page an uncouth sign
 Would say, "I love thee;" farther down this mark
 Shows plain, "for ever," yet the sense is dark
 To every eye that looks on it but thine.
 So is it even with my heart, thine ear
 Can catch each broken whisper it hath used;
 So even with my life, thou makest clear
 Its meaning, oft-times to myself confused;
 The souls that use one mother-tongue are free
 To mould their rapid speech, but when from thee
 I turn to others, straight I have to choose
 My words, as one who in a foreign dress
 Must clothe his thought, speaks slow in fear to err,
 Interpreting himself;

We do but guess
At one another darkly, 'mid the stir
That thickens round us ; in this life of ours
We are like players, knowing not the powers
Nor compass of the instruments we vex,
And by our rash, unskilful touch perplex
To straining discord, needing still the key
To seek, and all our being heedfully
To tune to one another's :

Ours were set
Together at the first ; each hand could move
Like a skilled Master's, knowing well each fret
And chord of the sweet viol he doth love,
All up and down each other's soul, and yet
Call forth new concords,—now with softer kiss
I move o'er other souls in fear to miss
Their latent charm ; these too, if better known,
Were worthier prizing ; * Love's great charity
Hath taught this lesson, as beside her knee
I stand, and child-like con it o'er and o'er,
“ Through loving one so much love all the more.”

* Note A.

II.

How much, dear friend, how much
 Wouldst thou from me? Oh, nothing but the
 whole
 I give or take: what good is in the touch
 Of hands that for awhile the other fold,
 Of eyes that read in each Life's unexpressed
 Deep hint of ecstasy to each confessed,
 Of hearts that for awhile are warm and blest
 Within the other, yet into the cold
 Must pass again, while fading from the West,
 Pale gleams withdraw, and grieving winds molest?
 Content, content! within a quiet room
 All warm and lit we meet, the outward gloom
 Is like a folding arm about us pressed;
 A space to love in, and a space to pray
 We find; content, content! until the Day
 Go down we quit not our belovèd rest.

III.

OFt have I bent my gaze
Adown our Life's steep edge with eyeballs dim
And thirsting soul, a-weary of the day's
Hot parching dust and glare ; this Well is deep,
Too seldom rise the waters to its brim,
And I had nought to draw with ! oft in sleep
I felt them touch my very lips, and flow
All o'er my forehead and my hands, but, lo !
I waked and thirsted ; looking down, I knew
Each pebble lying at the base, that drew

A glimmer from the sunbeam ; round the rim
I knew each flower, each forkèd fern that through
The stone did thrust its tongue, each moss that grew
Far down its cool and slippery sides—I knew
All but the water's freshness.

Now I yearn

No more in vain, no longer need I stoop

So wistful o'er the well, for like an urn

Is thy pure soul to me, wherein I scoop

The waters as I list, and still return.

IV.

WE broke no piece of gold,
We took no pledge of lock nor picture slid
 Within the breast ; our faith was not so cold
That it should ask for any sign ! We date
 Our marriage from our meeting day, and hold
These spousals of the soul inviolate
As they are secret ; for no friends were bid
 To grace our banquet, yet a guest Divine
Was there, Who from that hour did consecrate
 Life's water, turning it for us to wine.

V.

STERN voices say, "Too much
Thou givest unto one thy soul in trust ;
To frame such covenants with things of dust
Is but idolatry, that to decay
Doth quickly tend." I answer not to such,
But turning from them proudly, I appeal
Unto my equals,* none but those that feel
Shall be my judges in this question ; nay !
I will not unto these my cause unseal,
But bear it to a Court where I shall find
A yet more patient hearing ; far more kind
The Father than the Brethren ! He who made
The heart doth know its need, but what are we,
And whence have we our wisdom, unafraid
With hands unskilled to vex a mystery
We cannot disentangle ?

* Note B.

Yet I speak
Too harshly in this matter, silence best
Becometh happy spirits ; hearts at rest ;—
O Love, thy gentleness hath made me meek !

VI.

UPON thy lips this name
Of mine so softly taken, first became
That which it is in very deed, the name
Most Christian and most kind, by which I claim
A wide inheritance ;—and I have borne
This name so long, and only yester morn
Have learned its sweetness ! so doth life, our field
Redeemed for us, but slowly, slowly yield
The treasure hid within it ! all our less
Would grow to more, and this our Earth to Heaven,
Might we but pierce unto the blessedness
That lies so near us, might we but possess
The things that are our own, as they were given !

VII.

I TURN from things behind ;
They lose their savour ! now that on the core
Of Life content I feed, I fling the rind,
That once looked fair, aside for evermore,
For I have pierced beneath it. Since my eyes
Have looked upon thy face, to all things wise,
And pure, and noble they have clearer grown ;
But careless are they to the vanities
That once could hold them chained. I stood alone
To watch the long procession that yestreen
Moved through our city stately to the flow
Of martial music ; then I saw thee lean
From out a balcony, and all the show
Went by unmarked of me, as we had been
Alone beside the river winding slow ;—
So doth this world's fair Pageant pass me by,
I see but thee ! yet do not therefore grow
Unmindful of its goodly company :

I tracked those glittering ranks until they stayed

Within the square, and passing through the door
Of the great Minster, took within its shade
The sunshine after them ; like One that prayed

In silence, seemed that multitude, before
So bright and jubilant, now only made
The stiller for its vastness, as the sea
Doth soothe the sense with wide monotony
Of quiet waves unstirred. I saw thee kneel

Afar ; the organ, as it were the Soul
Of many human souls, that did reveal

Their secrets, sighed, as on its stormy roll
It gathered them ; my silent spirit drew
More close to those who prayed with me ; I knew
That each of these still faces, where I see
No charm to bid me look again, doth make
The sunshine of some eye, and for its sake
The heavens and earth look fairer : each that here
Doth kneel, is loved of some, or hath been dear,

The treasure of some heart beneath the sod.
Oh, we are held unto the other near
When each is dear to one—and all to God !

AFTER PARTING.

O LOVE, O Death ! how sweet,
How strange are ye ! oh Parting ! that dost stand
Between these twain, from touch of either hand,
One warm, one cold, thou winnest strength to meet
Thy hour and overcome it ! Tenderness
And woe are twins ! and may not deeply bless
Except together, when the tear one weeps
Falls in the golden cup the other keeps
Hid for this moment in his breast, unshown
Till needed most ;

When Love must leave its Own
Belovèd, loved unto the end, it broke
Its vase of costliest odours ; though it spoke
Before as none have spoken, then its tone
Was fullest, clearest ; breaking hearts have flown

To fasten on those words, "Be not afraid!"

And aching spirits, desolate, have grown
Like limpets to this Rock, "Now have I prayed
The Father for you, and ye are not lone,
I leave you not uncomforted." E'en so
Full oft since then hath Parting made us know
A Heavenly Presence ; while we broke our bread
With bitter herbs, the words were not our own
That then we spoke, and we were comforted.

For there is concentration in strong pain
That draws the soul together ; it can hold
Its breath beneath the waves, and like a bold
Strong diver, desperate will snatch and gain
What calmer moments fail of. One of old
Spake, looking on his judges, "Soon I die ;
So gather up my words that are not vain,—
The lip of Death turns speech to prophecy."
So hath the parting hour its agony
Of inspiration :

All our path with dew
Was drenched that autumn morning ; like a day
Begun too soon, our Life before us lay

In early chillness,—hard to live it through
Without each other ! slow our footsteps drew,
And slower, to our bourne, because they knew
They measured off the moments we must spend
Together ; we were silent—friend to friend
Was near as yet ; at last thou spakest low
My name, and whispered, “ Bless me ere I go ! ”
Oh, then I sadly thought, but did not speak :
How may *I* bless thee, I, oft proved so weak,
 So poor in blessing that I can but love,
Nor even bless through loving ? I will seek
 For that I cannot give. “ May One above,
Belovèd, love thee, keep thee, bless thee still ! ”
 I spake these words in sadness, but a flame
 Did sweep them from my lips ; the next that came
Was even as a Message,—“ *and He will !* ”

.

IN ABSENCE.

AND quick as when a blush
Drinks up within its hasty glow a tear
From off the cheek, within that sudden gush
Of warmth our sadness grew to better cheer.
Not now so wide, methinks, not now so drear
The blank that parts our lives, for Love between
Keeps ever moving ; even now I ween
Thy task becomes less hard ! for sacrifice
And patience are thy path, which ever lies
O'er odorous herbs ; but other destinies
And other toils are mine, and, like a goad,
The thought of thee doth urge me on the road
Where thou dost wait me : but lest this should fail,—
For Hope, the lover's friend, grows sometimes pale

In musing o'er his fortunes,—oft to me
A surer aim is present : I would be
Of thee more worthy and of Him that blest
My life with thine, and thus I cannot rest ;
 Spurred on by noble discontent, my care
Is still to make this proud, unquiet breast
 The fitter for the flower it may not wear !

THE FIRST LETTER.

NOT since the breeze that took
Thy soul by kind surprise, and turning o'er
Its pages on a sudden, let me look
Upon my name ere yet thou wast aware
(Keep thou that leaf turned ever down, that there
The book may open soonest !) have I known
A moment like to this ;

I keep thy seal
Unbroken, as it were thy hand in mine ;
I hold it clasped in silence, till I feel
A warmth hath reached my spirit ; then I ope
These pages, confident as one with Hope

In certain league ; I need but touch this spring
That now I play with to and fro, to bring
Thy Presence on the stillness ; these enclose

Thy spirit shut within them. Even now
Thy soul's breath is upon them—as a Rose

Fresh plucked and dewy with the morning, thou
Hast sent me of thine inner life that glows

In sweetness ; fain am I, yet know not how,
To send thee thus each fancy as it blows ;

But while I gather these my thoughts, they fade,
And pressed upon the page their colours fly,
And all their sap runs from them, wan and dry,

Like withered flowers within a herbal laid ;
And this may be, perchance, because my heart

Hath been alike their cradle and their tomb,
Close folded there too long, their hues depart,—

Yet press them unto thine, and they will bloom !

SILENCE.

I TURN unto the Past

When I have need of comfort ; I am vowed
To dear remembrances : most like some proud,

Poor Noble, who, on evil fortunes cast,
Has saved his pictures from the wreck, I muse
Mid these that I have gathered, till I lose
The dreariness of the Present !

On the hill
That noon in summer found us ; far below
We heard the river in a slumbrous flow
Chide o'er its pebbles, slow and yet more slow ;

Beneath our feet the very grasses slept,
Signed by the sliding sunbeam as it crept
From blade to blade, slow-stealing with a still
Admonitory gesture ; now a thrill
Ran lightly through the wood, but ere to sound
The shiver grew upon the hush profound,
It died encalmed ; methought a Spirit's sigh
Had then been audible, but none came by
To trouble us, and we were silent, fed
With golden musings by our friend that read
From out thy chosen Poet ; in a hall
Of mute expectancy we stood, where all
That listened with us held their breath unstirred ;
When suddenly the reader's voice let fall
Its flow of music ; sweet as was the song
He paused in, conquered by a spell more strong,
We asked him not its cadence to recall.
It seemed as if a Thought of God did fill
His World, that drawn unto the Father's breast,
Lay hushed with all its children. This was Rest,
And this the soul's true Sabbath, deep and still.
Then marvelled I no longer that a space
Is found in Heaven for Silence ; so to me
That hour made known its true sufficiency,

Revealed not oft below, because its place
Is with the Blessed ! Speech is but a part
Of Life's deep poverty, whereof the heart
Is conscious, striving in its vague unrest
To fill its void ; but when the measure pressed
And running over, to its clasp is given,
It seeketh nothing more, and Earth is blest
With Silence—even such as is in Heaven !

IN ILLNESS.

I SUNK beneath the wave
Of sleep, not drawn as oft by visions light
And soothing as the hand of Mermaid white,
But by intolerable pangs that drave
Me downwards, plunging like a diver keen
For some unrestful pause, some blank between
The fiery chinks of anguish, dimly seen
And deeply longed for ; yet I might not stir.
All day, beneath a cruel armourer,
The Hours—like weary slaves—slow, silent, pale,
Wrought link by link their iron mesh of mail
About my senses ; now a brief escape
I won, but after me a wingèd shape,
Most like a wild and weird musician, threw
His hand 'mid shattered chords, and did renew

The day's slow-dying torture. It was Pain
That held me—only lengthening out its chain,
And through its glare unmitigable drew
Strange forms from out the darkness ;—oh the
steep,
Rock-girdled citadel of rest to gain,
And so escape them ! but I strove in vain ;
For sleep hath its two Worlds ! a lower deep
Within its deep still opens ! Night is kind
As is the Day, so one doth fold behind
Its light, and one in darkness shroud a worn
And spectral Realm ; but now the veil was torn,
The gulf yawned wide, and down amid the waste
And leavings of existence, charred, defaced
It sucked my soul ; 'mid living agonies
I walked, on old disquietudes forlorn
I stumbled as I trode ; I saw them rise
And point at me, a lifetime's mockeries,
The dreary phantasms of giants shorn
And crippled of their strength ; on swords that gleamed
Mid oozy weeds, deep bedded to their hilt,
I gazed, and seemed no more like one that dreamed.
Once were these girt for valiant enterprise ;
I know not now if it were sloth or guilt

That rusted them, for all things did perplex
My spirit, dragging it among the wrecks
Of heart and brain ; hard stony eyes were set
On mine, with endless questionings that met
No answer ;

Then I know not how the strife
Gave way ; and passing through that outer court
Of giddy cries confused, I gained the shrine
Where sleep is kindest, holiest : too divine
Those eyes of hers for sadness, and for sport
Her brow too tender ! Then she laid on mine
Her hand, she pressed it with a hallowed sign,
And all its throbbings vanished ;

It was Night,
I stood with thee within a garden ; Night,
Yet never hath the Noonday been so fair,
For all the air was luminous, and white
Was every flower that grew around us there ;
We did not marvel at their fragrance rare ;
Their bloom was but the breathing in of light
That paled into a subtle odour ; these
Were gentle ghosts of flowers that other where

Bloomed many-coloured 'neath familiar trees ;
Now calm as spirits passed away in prayer.
Large-leaved and beautiful the Jessamine
Hung forth her stars ; the Rose did half resign
Her empire with her blush, and over all
The Lily reared her blossomed sceptre tall ;
While at our feet the Violet's purple fled
Would whisper mutely of a wound that bled

No longer ; then I know not what delight
Fell on our asking spirits, that addressed
Each other on the silence, " All is drest

For Death or for the Bridal, each is white
And each is solemn, each hath won for guest
An Angel, and we know not which is best."

SEORSUM.

“ The Heart is a Clock that gives warning before its Hour strikes.”

BEFORE they met they loved ;
Their souls fore-felt each other : passing through
This life's dim treasure-caverns, on them grew
A whisper, clearer as they onwards moved ;
“ There is a Sesame that opens to
Yet richer chambers,” so like Him who drew
The perfect circle of our globe, and proved,
That waiting for him on its margin (*where*
He knew not yet), a World in summer air
And muffling leaves and greenest quiet slept
Until he came to wake it, they were 'ware
Of this bright realm, this Virgin of the Sun,
This bride unsought, unwooed, that should be won.
But of the luxury, the wealth it kept

In store, its gorgeous wilds, its solitude
Instinct with life, its tropic shade and glow
Alternating, they knew not, nor could know.
Yet, as they neared that shore, the deep was strown
With drifts of fragrant things, and seawards blown,
Strange birds with sunshine warm upon them, clung
About their masts, while evermore, like tales
So vague and sweet that spoken language fails
To catch their music-meaning, gentlest gales
Curled up the waves before their prow, and sung
And whistled clear within their fluttering sails,
To lure them to the country whence they sprung.

So when they met they loved ;
They took not counsel of the Eye or Ear ;
These are but erring vassals, and the clear
Soul-region in its rarer atmosphere
Needs not their failing witness. This was June,
The noon of Life, the heart was at its noon ;
A noon by Summer lulled to sleep, and hid
Beneath its leaves, half-stirring to a tune
Self-sung in happy dreams ; while sunshine slid
Adown the hill's steep side, and overtook
And meshed within its golden net, each nook

O'ershadowed with dark growths, and filled each cleft
And thunder-splintered chasm storms had left ;
When these two mounted on a blissful tide,

Sailed each within the other's soul—no oar
Flashed light along their way, no canvas wide
Impelled them ; but a steadfast current bore
Them o'er the level champaign, till they neared

A Palace, where, through open gate and door,
They gazed together on the land that lay
Before them, glittering peak and gleaming bay,

As on a country known to them before,
Though unbeheld : and even as a King
Upon his crowning day new robes will fling
On all around him, so each common thing
Stood forth in light apparellèd, and took
Its hue and semblance even from the look
They cast upon it ; yet, thus venturing,
I speak not wisely,—nay, *these* only took
Their pristine hues—their colour that forsook
And fled, when Man with Death upon his track
Went woeful forth from Eden's gate, came back

When Eden's tongue was spoken ! and the smile
That Nature 'neath her Mother's brow of care
Hides in her loving eyes, dawned bland and fair

To see her children's gladness ! so the while
They sat beneath one crown, upon one throne,
And wrapped within the purple, o'er their own
Stretched forth the sceptre ; never dial flung
Its warning shadow, never iron tongue
Knelt forth the busy hours ;* they took no heed
Of Time or of his flight, nor had they need :
For they together with the world were young,
And ever would be ! Life in very deed
Held back for them no Future, and the Past
Lay calm before them in a mirror glassed
To feed sweet fancies, showing how it led
To this bright *now* ; so all things ministered
And wrought their bidding ; here they deemed it well,
Like her who said, " I sit a Queen," to dwell
In joy for evermore ; but change befell.

They parted but they loved ;
How could *these* part ? what sword could be in life
To sever hearts like these ? Methinks its strife
Should but have proved the furnace in whose glow
The fiery bars of metal fuse, and grow
More close together welded ; even so.

* Note C.

But in this world of ours the heart, though strong
And armed and watchful, never holdeth long

Its own in peace ; for sure as to the moon
The Ocean rises, here a steadfast law
Doth hold or rend asunder hearts that draw

Together, restless till they meet, then soon
Divided, and for ever ; it would seem
That God hath made these loving hearts and bold,
For Him and for His world that lies a-cold
For lack of generous fuel, not to fold
Their warmth within each other, but to stream
Afar and wide, with broader, purer gleam.
How this may be I know not, but I know
That never more within one hearth-light's glow
These sat together ; never, gazing through
One lattice, watched the sky ; but when they knew
Their paths were severed, rising, on their way
Went forth before the breaking of the day,
And parted on Life's cross-road,—not before
Each lifted up a voice of weeping sore,
And blessed the other's journey ! So they moved
(In tents abiding) through new lands that bore
No likeness to the country where of yore
They dwelt together : other scenes and looks

Grew round them ; other hearts became the books
They read and mused in ; other trials proved,
And other blessings gladdened, yet they loved.

They parted, yet they love ;
And shall these spirits in an air serene,
Where nought can shadow, nought can come between,
Meet once again, and to the other grow
More close and sure than could have been below ?
Or will that State, that blissful Commonweal,
Leave, each of all possessing, room to feel
For other bliss than merges in the flow
Of Love's great ocean, whence these drops did steal
To Earth of old, and wandered to and fro ?
—I know not of this now, but I shall know.

CORAM.

THOU camest in a dream,—

So sudden taken from my life that now

'Mid all Earth's strangeness, it would strangest seem
To feel thy hand meet mine in greeting,—Thou

That clasped it once so close ! but seas have swept
Between us, silken Spring-times have unrolled
Their bursting green, wild Autumns shaken gold
Upon our paths, since last I looked on thee ;
And on our Life's great organ suddenly
Have keys gone silent, whence the music rolled
In blissful waves ; but still through manifold

Swift change and dreary pause our hearts have kept
(Like quiet watchers left in peace to hold

A tryst with Thought, while others deemed they slept)
The steadfast secret of our Love untold.

Together and alone

We stood : they have not loved who have not known
What meaning lies in those two words—alone,
Together and alone !

And ever went a dash

Of tinkling, chiming waters through my dream,
As of a brook that sends a quiet flash
Through tangled boughs, and ever golden brown
From wet bright stone to stone goes lapsing down ;
There oft we stood with hands together locked,
And lips whose gay and wandering converse mocked
The deeper oracles that ran below
Light words, light leaves, clear waters in their flow,
Till through those wood-aisles dim
A breath of soul, a consecration-hymn
Rose gradual on the summer's sunset glow.

Then came an hour that tore

Our lives asunder, but within my dream
Far, far away did change and parting seem
As waves that chide upon some distant shore ;
Our hands were locked, our lips—we did not speak,
Our very souls were locked,—we did not seek

For word, or look, or outward token more ;
It was not Heaven, because we were not glad,
It was not Earth, no future made us sad,
But in a calm, unshadowed land between,
Our spirits loosened from their bonds terrene
Did meet, and commune in a language clear,
Of things that they had known and suffered here—
And I awoke and knew thou hadst been *near* !



TO A LONG-PARTED FRIEND.

"That I never made use of your stay here to unite the present with departed days is one of the things—there are not a few of them—for which I can never be consoled ; it was as though a spell lay upon me ; I felt it would be enough to speak one word, but that word I could not unclothe my lips to speak. The Past could not rise again from its grave, and I felt as though it would have shaken the foundations of that Present, which it is now my duty to preserve and develop. My mind is like a nation that has passed through a revolution, and must proceed in a new order, the old order being irrevocably destroyed. . . . Yet how was it with me after you had gone?"—*Niebuhr to Count Adam Moltke.*

I.

AS by a camp-fire in the wilderness
Two hunters meet, that o'er the Prairie long
Have roamed on distant tracts companionless ;
So to this city, drifted by the stress
That draws the nations hither—in the throng
We stood together in this mortal press
A moment face to face ; Thou didst not guess
At mine, and I—forgive me then this wrong—

By favour of the light that fitful fell

Did let thee pass unchallenged ; so that look,
Thine olden look, so long unseen, so well

Remembered, troubled me ; thine aspect shook
The strong foundations of my soul, I knew
It was the Past within its grave that drew
A long, deep, sighing breath, and like a pent
Volcanic force, this smouldering element
Would kindle at thy glance ; I felt a stir
Among the ashes of a sepulchre
Long sealed, long smooth with grass, with flowers
o'ergrown,

A word from Thee, and bursting through the stone

The Dead had risen up ! before one shrine
We knelt together ; though the fires are cold

We lighted there, I deem that still we hold

A mournful faith unto this worship old

And lovely, counting it for half Divine.

Now is that altar broken, and a sign

From Heaven hath warned us hence—we may not
bring

The living Past again, we can but wring

Its secrets from its grasp, disquieting

Like one of old, with awful charm its sleep :

Oh, leave its rest unbroken, I assign
A day far hence to meet Thee—now thine eye
Would vex me with its kindness, silently
Would turn where mine is turning: even yet,
I am as one that wistful o'er a wave
Stoops down, intent, and sees beneath it lie
The fragments of a wreck, that glistening wet
Tempt down the eager outstretched hand; I crave
A little longer pause, for soon or late
Come all things to a calm;—I do but wait.

I turned, and thou wert gone;
O then my heart rose sudden up and passed
A hasty judgment; saying, I had cast
A Life within that moment from me, more
Than life would give again, and chiding sore,
Like one defrauded of its right, it took
Its arrows tipped with olden love, a look,
A word remembered barbs them—oh, my friend,
I turn to thee for solace;—draw this glaive
Deep plunged unto the hilt from out my breast!
Thy hand it was unwittingly that drave
It home, and none beside can give it rest;

Speak comfort to my soul, oh reconcile
My spirit with itself ! upon thy track
My heart runs after Thee ; yes, mile by mile,
It follows Thee, it does not call thee back !

II.

I SAID, I do assign

A day far hence to speak with Thee ; if late

Or soon it fall, I know not, for its date

Rests not with me, but One above, who draws

Our ruins to an order through the fine

And ceaseless working of His kindly laws ;

For we are hasty builders incomplete ;

Our Master follows after, far more slow

And far more sure than we, for frost and heat,

And winds that breathe, and waters in their flow

Work with Him silently ; we stand too near

The part as yet to look upon the whole ;

That thing which shall be doth not yet appear ;

It is not with the eye but with the soul

That we must view God's work ;

Of when and where

We ask not wisely ; if our meeting were
Delayed indeed, until no more to part

We meet at last within a Mansion fair
Where there are many such, would this impart
A sadness to thy spirit ? heart with heart
May commune safely when the Master's art

Hath tuned His perfect instrument ! below
We learn not half its sweetness ; not for men
Its broken strings are joined ; it keeps its flow
Of music for the Land where none again
May wring its chords ;

Yet even here, I know,
Are seasons calm and glad that antedate
The coming in of happier cycles, where
The human soul, too long left desolate,
Shall reckon up its Sabbaths, and repair
Its pleasant things laid waste ; upon that Rest
Together we shall enter ! we shall share
Its joy above, below,—as God deems best !

TO * *

“Then, towards the right, I saw a cloud of the colour of opal, and towards the left, a dusky cloud, and under both, the appearance as of a falling shower; under the latter, as of rain at the end of autumn, and under the former, as of dew at the beginning of spring, and immediately I returned from the spirit into the body, and from the spiritual into the natural world.”—SWEDENBORG.

I.

I SAY not to Thee, “Dost
Thou mind Thee how that eve above the dell
We sat together?” for I know thou must
Remember it, as I remember, well.

I held thy hand in mine ;
We spoke of many things, with frequent calm
Of tender pause between ; the air was balm
That stirred the pages of the Book we held
Betwixt our hearts, till by their warmth compelled,

We brought its faded characters to shine
Upon us, tracing them with finger fine
Still farther back, and when, upon a word
We paused, that time had worn, or grief had slurred,
Our spirits drew the closer, till at last

I read, as if by hearth-light flame, each line
Within the glow thy soul around thee cast,
Whilst thou didst read them by the light of mine.

And loath its clasps to close
We hung above that Book ; we kissed its leaves,
And marvelled at their fragrance, till a rose
Dropt from them, gathered once when summer-eves
Were kindest, it had withered there ; the bloom
Had fallen from it, yet, within its tomb
It strewed with odours all its winding-sheet,
Fragrant in life, among the dead how sweet !

I held thee by the hand ;
The evening deepened round us, still we read,
Evoking those old spells, till from the Dead
We summoned up our Youth and saw it stand
Before us beautiful ! upon its brow
Sat pain and sweetness mingling, even now

I know not which was victor ; then we took
Our counsel with the pages of the Book
To reckon with it harshly, but this dust
Turned on us sudden with the look of yore—
And of the wealth it took away, the trust
It broke with us, all question we forbore.

But even as a child,
Lured by a bird's clear singing, makes a track
Within the wood's deep heart, did fancies wild
And lovely draw us farther, farther back ;
Until, 'mid windings green and lone we felt
Our feet were deep in flowers we loved before
Those grassy paths brake sudden, and we dwelt
In Arcady no more !

We murmured, " Yea, no more
We know our Eden's place, yet is it well ;
Although the gate be barred for us, the Door
Is ever open."

Suddenly there fell
A glory from the Heavens, and all the dell
Was filled with quivering light, as in a cup

Its woody hollow caught and kindled up
The sun's last sinking flashes ; on the sky
There was no cloud, no flaming bar, no line
Of fire along the West, but solemnly
Heaven glowed unto its depths, as if the curse
Were lifted upwards from our universe
One moment's Sabbath space, and only Love
Stooped down above its World ! so from above
A smile dropt visibly on Earth, that prest
To meet that sign of reconcilment blest
On brow and bosom blest.

.

We spoke no more ;
Our souls were silenced ; then we thought to fold
The pages of the volume worn and old
That still lay open, but the sunlight fell
And tracked each letter luminous and bold,
Until it shone a golden Chronicle,—
O sweet, sad Book, traced o'er
With marvels ! light must fall
Upon thy page from Heaven, before
We see that Love writ *all* !

II.

THEN while we mused, a word
Fell on us, spoken once on desert plain,
“Go, gather up these fragments that remain,
And store them carefully, that none be lost ;”

And at that Voice methought the ashes stirred
Within the Vale of Vision ;* sere and dry
Each severed hope, each shred of memory,
Did shake and come together. Suddenly
Our life from days when infancy was sweet
Stood up before us, all from head to feet
Transfigured fair.

“How holy is this place !”
I said, and wist not what I spake ; methought
I felt like one upon his journey brought

* Ezek. xxxvii.

By ways he knows not of ; these pathways dim
Had ever seemed their promised end to cheat,
Yet had they led to Him
In whom Life's tangled, broken threads complete
Are gathered up, its wasted things made meet
For holier use, its roughness smoothed, its bitter
turned to sweet !

Then saw we how this hour,
That we had chidden with, this mortal life,
That broke its faith with us, had not the power
To keep it better ; weariness and strife
So marred its gentler purpose ; yet compest
Among its thick-set thorns, because the air
Did breathe about it all too chill and rare,
Our Past had held our Future, like a Rose
That may not yet its perfect soul disclose,
Lest angry winds should scatter and molest ;
So shut within this narrow bud, its woes
Were but the crumpled leaves too closely prest ;
And all its loveliness did but enclose
The germ of after beauty, now a Guest,
But soon to be a Dweller !

So we stood,
While gradual to our feet the shadows fell ;
We looked abroad, and all was very good ;
On all within was written, " It is well ;"
For things that were and would be met and kissed
Each other in the heart, that like a child
For loss of each bright joy that it had missed,
Was by a loving promise reconciled !

•

TO A DISTANT FRIEND.

INSCRIBED TO D. E. L.

“There are wonders in true affection.”

Religio Medici.

I KNEW not ye were sad,
Dear distant friends of mine ! Across the sea
Ye sent me only tidings making glad,
And all was gladness round ; for Life to me
Had grown a summer's day, whose very air
Was luxury to breathe, and on Love's fair
Smooth forehead lurked no folded plait of care ;
Yet, borne I knew not whence, a sadness stole,
Disquieting the music of my soul

With dreary change ; as one that, feasting high
At some great banquet, feels a tremor chill
Pass o'er him, and, grown sudden pale and still,
Sets down his brimming goblet with a sigh,
So all the wine of my felicity
Was mixed with tears ! oh, strange that now the cup
Should shrink within itself, and narrow up
For fulness poured within it ! dark distrust
Was this of God, and servile fear, unjust
To Love's ungrudging sunshine : I would pray,
And so this heaviness should pass away ;
But when your names arose that ever there
Are nearest to my spirit, all my prayer
Was stayed upon their sound ; as when a strain
Recurring oft unbidden, will enchain
The sense to track its cadence, I must pause
Upon these words that ever on my way
O'erlook me urgent, " Pray yet longer, pray
For them thou lovest,—is there not a cause ? "

And even then ye wept ;
And even then o'er Desert and o'er Sea
Were deathful tidings speeding on to me,
That knew them through a steadfast pulse that kept

Its pace with yours ; I needed but to tear
My festal robes to show the sackcloth bare
 They hid ; and even with the iron tongue
 That knelled your loss, a warning presage flung
Across my path the shadow of your care !

 And quickly hath this keen
Vibration brought us to the other near,
 Because the air betwixt us was serene ;
And calm as when on mountain summits clear,
We count distinct the fall of distant bells,
So is there stillness round the soul that dwells
In Love ! The spirit loosened from the jar
Of earthly turbulence, can hear afar
Belovèd footsteps stir, and thus we prove
Through very pain the comforting of Love.
For we have parted at a wrench from all
The things we held in common, so that now
One wears the rose of joy, while on some brow
 Or in some bosom best-beloved, the thorn
Is rankling deep ; for now we may not press
Each other's hand or lip, we do but guess
At one another's faces far withdrawn.

 And one is crowned and robed, while one forlorn

Doth sit upon the ground ; our lots are cast
So wide, upon the waste your whisper dies,
And while we tell you of our smile it flies.
For even while we speak with you—so fast
Life's golden sands are fleeting—unto Past
Our Present darkens ! Yet the heart hath set
Its calm Eternal Dial to a Sun
That changes not.

Oh, friends, we had not met
E'en when together ; heart when drawn to heart
Most near, had shrunk and shivered, held apart
By chillness from within—more blank, more keen
Than seas that roll, than winds that sweep between,
Except for Him who holdeth even yet
Our souls in one. Oh, Love, that doth o'ersweep
The gulfs of Time and Space, and o'er our sleep
And o'er our waking brood, if *dear* and *near*
Are one in thy blest language even here,
How may it fare with them that on a shore
Where none are parted, none are troubled more,
A little farther from us dwell, set free
From bonds that fetter us?—And may there be
In heavenly harps a chord that vibrates still
In swift yet painless unison with ill

That mars not perfect music? Yet I cast
My plummet down a mystery too vast
For mortal line to fathom. Deep to deep
Doth call, yet wake no answer. Love will keep
This sweetest of its secrets till the last !

TO MY FRIENDS AT —.

THIS love of ours hath been
Awhile mislaid, it never could be lost ;
I did not fear for it, yet somewhat crossed
My spirit mournfully, as o'er the grass
The little cloudlets darken as they pass.
It was a shadow from without that swept
The sunshine off our spirits, yet I wept,
So much I missed that sunshine ! Sad and strange
It seemed to me that any chill should creep
Across our Love ; yet patient o'er its sleep
I watched and warmed it safe through every change,
Until it wakened smiling ! All things came
As they had been of old, yet not the same,

For nought returns again ! but far more sure,
More deep our trust, more fitted to endure
Life's changeful skies ; we mourn not for that fled
 First April bloom ; we count not up the cost
Of that sweet blossom on the breezes sped,—
 The ripened fruit need fear no after-frost !

MEETING.

O H, how elate my look,—

Far down the thronged and lighted table sent
Upon a careless quest indifferent,—

Met thine in mirthful flashing! Then we took
Our leave together, and, like boys released
By the glad stroke of Noonday, from the feast

Went home beneath the starlight. Oh, that night,
How shall I e'er forget it! At a bound

My spirit rose, a river that had found
Its level on a sudden; forth in chase
Quick vagrant fancies rushed as in a race,

Unemulous and glad; while at the light
Of those wild torch-fires solemn thoughts and deep
Enkindled clear, as on a northern sky,
Through Borealis gleams that flash and leap,

The stars look down. What was that hour to me !
What is it now ! My soul hath been more free,
More noble, since that meeting ; to the laws
Of this strange country for awhile in pause
Content to hold my breath ; with step more bold
Because my wings have grown, I walk these old
Accustomed pathways.

Earnest Friend, thy youth
Of soul makes all things fresher ; in thy truth
Grows all more true, more real ; come and hold
Thy mirror to my soul, that I may be
The more myself for having been with thee !

PARTING.

TO E. L. R.

WE parted not like lovers in their youth,
Fond pledge and promise eager to renew,
But e'en like steadfast-hearted friends, whose truth,
Tried by world-wear, world-change, soul-conflict,
knew

Its strength and rested ; so our words were few.
We parted with the clamour of the street
Around us thick, yet secret, lone, and sweet
Was our communing. Then I did not say
As oft of yore, " Dear friend, when far away,
Remember me," nor thou, " Forget me not."
What is this life that *Thou* shouldst be forgot

For all that it hath yet to give me? Nay!

In this world or the next I count to be

Remembering and remembered; we have shared
The cloud and sunshine here, Eternity

Will never blight the flower that Time hath spared!

TO A DEPARTED SPIRIT.

“And *there*, in Abraham's bosom, whatever it be which that bosom signifies, lives my sweet friend. For what other place is there for such a soul?”

ST. AUGUSTINE'S *Confessions*.

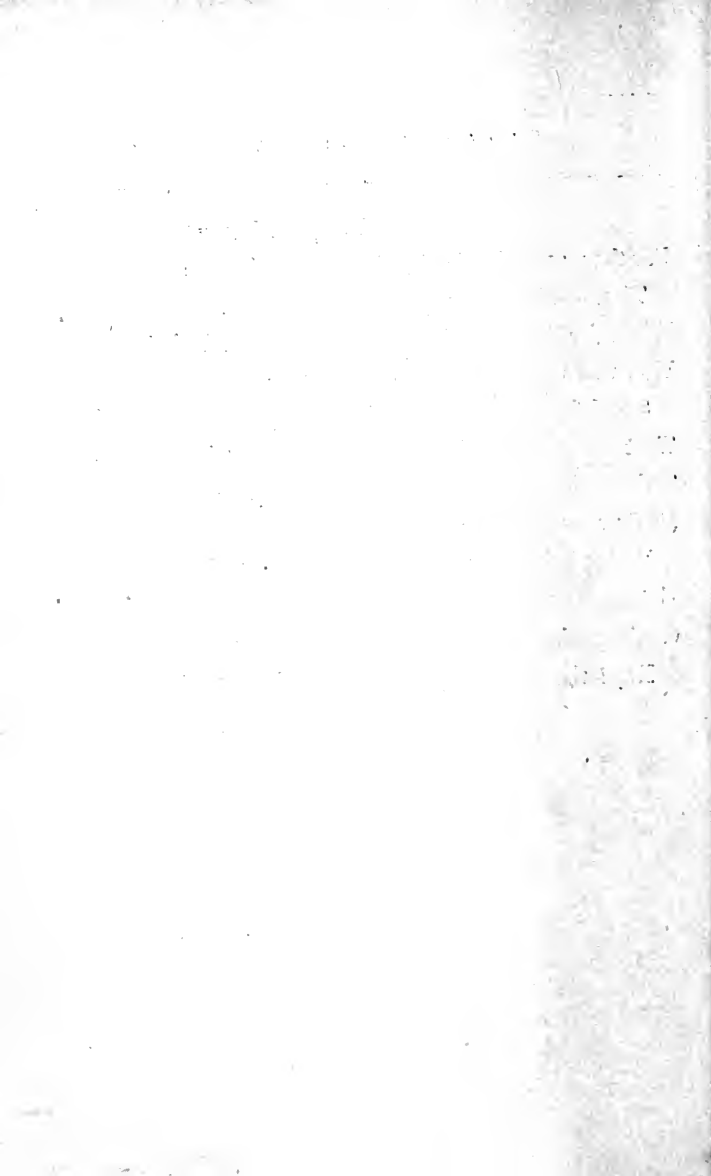
OFT was I wont to pray
For thee in olden days ; our spirits knew
A common travail, and upon the way
We never stayed to commune, but we drew
A comfort from the other, inly cheered ;
So knowing of the things beloved and feared
Of thee, O gentle Spirit ! as before
I walked, an elder pilgrim, o'er and o'er
I scanned the ground for thee, and it was sweet
To think that after me thy tender feet

Might find a smoother path ; when suddenly
Thou didst o'ertake me with a footstep fleet,
And wingèd, turning on me such a bright,
Sweet, joyous face, I knew that thou hadst neared
Thy journey's end, and even then appeared
The long-sought home, the Father's house in sight ;
While from its flaming windows all alight
Came festal sounds.

Then, Friend beloved, for thee
I could not pray as once ; though still arose
Thy name because of use, would somewhat say,
" Pray not for her, but for thyself and those
Who linger far behind ; the little way
That she hath yet to travel, like the rose
Doth blossom, paved with love ; her kindred wait
E'en now to welcome her within the gate ;
But ere their dancing and their songs resound,
Her spirit rushing on before, hath met
The Father coming forth ; her cheek is wet
With reconciling tears. Oh, wake no sound,
She seeketh nothing further ! she hath found
Him whom her soul desired by night and day,—
What wouldst thou ask for her ? "

Yet must I pray
For thee, so spake I soft, "The stream is wide
That lies between; oh, gentle be its flow
When she doth cross,"—that boon was not denied.
Now that thy feet upon the hither side
Stand firm, I charge thee, Friend, by all below
That knit our souls in one, that thou dost take
This music from my lips, for thou canst frame
Its flow more fitly; only change thy name
Beloved, for mine. I lay on thee this task,
Entreat for me!* for thou hast drawn more near
God's gracious heart, and closer to His ear,—
Nay! thou dost pray for me, I need not ask!

* Note D.



LIBER VERITATIS.

PART SECOND.

" Thoughts too deep to be expressed,
Yet too strong to be suppressed.

GEORGE WITHER.

THE RECONCILER.

“And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book.”—*The Revelation of St. John.*

ALL things are reconciled
In Thee, O Lord! all fierce extremes that beat
Along Time's shore, like chidden waves grown mild,
Have crept to kiss Thy feet!

For there is no more sea
Within Thy kingdom; so within Thy reign
Are no more tides that murmur and complain,
Like ancient foes that seem through some dark law
Their life from out each other's hate to draw;

So Light and Darkness, Good and Evil, set
Against the other's being, strive, and yet
Contending mix, while caught and driven by winds
 So keen and restless in their rage, the Will,
Drawn hither, thither, trembles, till it finds
 Its centre, and is still.

 Then nothing is displaced,
Thou drawest all things to an Order fair ;
 The things we treasure most with those our haste
 Doth count for nought, alike in Thee are graced
With beauty past compare.

 For all grows sweet in Thee,
Since Thou didst gather us in One, and bring
 This fading flower of our humanity
To perfect blossoming.

 All comes to bloom ! this wild
Green outward World of ours, that still must wear
The furrow on its brow, by print of care
And toil struck deep ; this world by Sin made sad,
 Hath felt Thy foot upon its sod, and smiled,—
The desert place is glad !

Thou madest all things glad
As they were good. When first Thy sunbeam flew
Abroad, it lit on nothing that was sad ;
So now is all made new
That meets in Thee ! Thou takest—for thy birth
Is of the Morning's womb, and so the dew
Lies ever on it—of the things that Earth
Hath left for waste, their freshness to renew.
Him most of all, the Chief
Of things thy hands have fashioned, sorest curst
Yet holding still the First-born's Birthright ; first
In grandeur and in grief.

Of old perplexed he stood
And questioned much with things that did appear
Of things that were, and for the unseen Good
He sought 'mid present shows, but neither ear
Was there, nor voice to give an answer clear ;
So listening oft, O Thou Desired of all,
To hear afar Thy coming footsteps fall,
Thy shadow on the murky atmosphere
Grew gross and palpable, and soon his sense
Discerned not well if foe or friend were near ;
While whirling, ringing still from sphere to sphere

Of widening thought, went up his bitter cry
Of "*whence*" and "*why*," and evermore this *whence*
And *why* did clash together for reply.

Until for aye to quell
This battle, that had grown for him too sore
To bring his foes to silence, and compel
His doubtful friends to weary him no more,
With changeful aspects and with frequent strife,
Thou camest suddenly :

And first with Life
Thou madest friends for us ; our lives in Thine
Grow kind and gracious, Lord ! when Thou didst
make
Thy soul an offering for sin, Thy love
Was even unto Death ; yea, far above,
For Thou didst suffer Life for us !* to take
More hard than to resign.

And since this garment old
And fretted by the moth Thy love hath borne
Upon Thee, all that wear it in its fold
With Thee enwrapt and gathered, have grown bold,

* Note E.

To Thee and to each other closer drawn ;
 Pale grows our purple pride
 Beside this vesture dyed
In Kingly blood ; before our common name
We feel our titles but a gorgeous shame,
That doth betray, not clothe, our nakedness ;
 But Heaven and Earth have been
 More near, since Earth hath seen
Its God walk Earth as Man ; since Heaven hath
 shown
 A Man upon its throne ;
 The street and market-place
 Grow holy ground ; each face,
 Pale faces, marked with care,
 Dark, toil-worn brows, grows fair ;
King's children are these all ; though want and sin
Have marred their beauty glorious within,
We may not pass them but with reverent eye ;
 As when we see some goodly temple graced
 To be Thy dwelling, ruined and defaced,
The haunt of sad and doleful creatures, lie
Bare to the sky, and open to the gust,
 It grieveth us to see This House laid waste,
It pitieth us to see it in the dust !

Our dreams are reconciled,
Since Thou didst come to turn them all to Truth ;
The World, the Heart are dreamers in their youth
Of visions beautiful, and strange and wild ;
And Thou, our Life's Interpreter, dost still
At once make clear these visions and fulfil ;
Each dim sweet Orphic rhyme,
Each Mythic tale sublime
Of strength to save, of sweetness to subdue,
Each morning dream the few,
Wisdom's first Lovers told, in stately speech,
Within the porch, or underneath the beech,
If read in Thee comes true ;
And these did mock the other, saying, " See
These dreamers," but in Thee
Their speech is plain, their witnesses agree ;
So doth Earth mock the heart's fond Faiths and
rend
Our idols from our failing grasp, and fling
Dust, dust upon our altar-shrines, yet bring
No worship in their place, but Thou, O Friend
From Heaven, that madest this our heart Thine own,
Dost pierce the broken language of its moan ;
Thou dost not scorn our needs, but satisfy !

Each yearning deep and wide,
Each claim is justified ;
Our young illusions fail not though they die
Within the brightness of Thy Rising, kissed
To happy death, like early clouds that lie
About the gates of Dawn, a golden mist
Paling to blissful white, through rose and amethyst.

The World that puts Thee by,
That opens not to greet Thee with Thy train,
That sendeth after Thee the sullen cry,
“We will not have Thee over us to reign ;”
Itself doth testify, through searchings vain,
Of Thee and of its need, and for the good
It will not, of some base similitude
Takes up a taunting witness, till its mood,
Grown fierce o’er failing hopes, doth rend and tear
Its own illusions, grown too thin and bare
To wrap it longer ; for within the gate
Where all must pass, a veiled and hooded Fate,
A dark Chimera, coiled and tangled lies,
And he who answers not its questions dies,—
Still changing form and speech, but with the same
Vexed riddles, Gordian-twisted, bringing shame

Upon the nations that with eager cry
Hail each new solver of the mystery ;
Yet he, of these the best,
Bold guesser, hath but prest
Most nigh to Thee, our noisy plaudits wrong ;
True Champion, that hast wrought
Our help of old, and brought
Meat from this eater, sweetness from this strong.

Oh, Bearer of the key
That shuts and opens with a sound so sweet
Its turning in the wards is melody,
All things we move among are incomplete
And vain until we fashion them in Thee!
We labour in the fire,
Thick smoke is round about us, through the din
Of words that darken counsel, clamours dire
Ring from thought's beaten anvil, where within
Two Giants toil, that even from their birth
With travail-pangs have torn their mother Earth,
And wearied out her children with their keen
Upbraidings of the other, till between
Thou camest, saying, "Wherefore do ye wrong
Each other?—ye are Brethren." Then these twain

Will own their kindred, and in Thee retain
Their claims in peace, because Thy land is wide
As it is goodly ! here they pasture free,
This lion and this leopard, side by side,
A little child doth lead them with a song ;
Now, Ephraim's envy ceaseth, and no more
Doth Judah anger Ephraim chiding sore,
For one did ask a Brother, one a King,
So dost Thou gather them in one, and bring,
Thou, King for evermore, for ever Priest,
Thou, Brother of our own from bonds released,
A Law of Liberty,
A Service making free,
A Commonweal, where each has all in Thee.

And not alone these wide,
Deep-planted yearnings, seeking with a cry
Their meat from God, in Thee are satisfied ;
But all our instincts waking suddenly
Within the soul, like infants from their sleep,
That stretch their arms into the dark and weep,
Thy voice can still. The stricken heart, bereft
Of all its brood of singing hopes, and left
'Mid leafless boughs a cold forsaken nest

With snow-flakes in it, folded in Thy breast
Doth lose its deadly chill ; and grief that creeps
Unto Thy side for shelter, finding there
The wound's deep cleft, forgets its moan and weeps
Calm quiet tears, and on Thy forehead Care
Hath looked, until its thorns, no longer bare,
Put forth pale roses. Pain on Thee doth press
Its quivering cheek, and all the weariness,
The want that keep their silence, till from Thee
They hear the gracious summons, none beside
Hath spoken to the world-worn, "Come to Me,"
Tell forth their heavy secrets.

Thou dost hide
These in Thy bosom, and not these alone,
But all our heart's fond treasure that had grown
A burden else : oh, Saviour, tears were weighed
To Thee in plenteous measure ! none hath shown
That Thou didst smile ! yet hast Thou surely made
All joy of ours Thine own ;

Thou madest us for Thine ;
We seek amiss, we wander to and fro ;
Yet are we ever on the track Divine ;

The soul confesseth Thee, but sense is slow

To lean on aught but that which it may see ;
So hath it crowded up these Courts below

With dark and broken images of Thee ;
Lead Thou us forth upon Thy Mount, and show
Thy goodly patterns, whence these things of old
By Thee were fashioned ; One though manifold,
Glass Thou thy perfect likeness in the soul,
Show us Thy countenance, and we are WHOLE !

THE QUESTION.

“Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord ; Thou knowest that I love Thee.”
—JOHN xxi. 15.

LORD, didst Thou turn Thine eyes
On me, and speak upon this solemn shore
The words that wounded with a keen surprise
Thine erring, loving servant, grieved the more
That love, as doubtful of its own, should seek
To put it thrice to proof ; I could but speak
With him ; I could but say, “ Below, above,
Thou knowest all,—Thou knowest that I love.”

But canst thou say with Her,
The Bride of ancient Song, "My soul hath found
Him whom it only loveth ; wilt thou stir
And quit Me now for these that stand around—
Am I more dear than these?" I answer, "Yea,
Than each, than all more dear ! I could not stray
From Thee, O Shepherd, skilled with silver sound
Of voice and hand attuned, Thy flock to please,
And lure them o'er the mountains, knowing best
Beside what streams, beneath what spreading trees
To solace them, to give their wanderings rest ;
Why should I ever leave Thee ? which of these
Hath charm so sure ?"

"Yet hast thou never feared
To gaze on these around, lest they should grow
Through fairness to thy soul too much endeared ?"
"Nay, this I fear not ; since I learned to know
A truer fairness, lighting on the Rose
That doth within its folded breast enclose
All fragrance, being as the soul that glows
In every other flower, I wander free
About this earthly garden ; sweet to me

Its blooms and safe ! for they that of Thy wine
Have tasted, will not from its strength decline
For any meaner cup ! they love not Thee
Enough, who fear that any else should be
Too much beloved !”

So spake I, over bold,
And knew not, Lord, that round Thy Tree of Life
The serpent still doth twine with deadly fold ;
I knew not then the thrice-refinèd gold
Was thrid with baser clay ; that still the strife
Goes on, till Death doth part 'twixt things accurst
And things of blessing ; severing best and worst
That grow together—easy still to miss
And hard to win—*Thou* knowest, Lord, of this,
Thou only knowest, what are we to speak ?
Yet, Thou hast spoken, “Blessed are the meek,”
And “they that mourn are blessed.” I can touch
This border of Thy garment ; now I know
I love Thee, Lord, I will not let Thee go ;
I will not ask, “Are these beloved too much ?”
Too little, Lord ! because my heart is cold
In loving Thee ! I make with one of old

This fervent prayer, Do Thou enlarge my coast
And o'er it rule Thyself! where Thou art most
Beloved, is room for all! the heart grows wide
That holdeth Thee! a Heaven where none doth press
Upon the other, none of more or less
Doth ask solicitous, for ever there
Is bread enough, and fulness still to spare,
And none that come depart unsatisfied.

FORSAKEN.

MARTYRS, through fire and steel
Have felt the tracking of the steadfast eye
Of faithful friend or kind disciple nigh
That strengthened them ; beside the cruel wheel
Hath Woman waited, wiping from a face
Beloved, the damps of anguish ; kings in chase
Upon the mountains held from day to day,
Have leaned on peasants scorning to betray
The baffled hope, the head discrownèd : nay,
A hand unseen upon a tyrant's tomb
Hath scattered flowers ; so strong above disgrace,
Despair, and death, rise human hearts ; of whom—
King, Martyr, Malefactor—is it said
That all forsook him, *all forsook and fled,*

Save of One only? Human love forsakes,
Yet is not all forsaken! He that takes
This drear pre-eminence of woe, alone
Forsaketh never—never! He hath known
That pang too well; O Saviour, with Thine own
Too little seemed it for Thy love to share
All bitter draughts, so hast Thou bid this cup
Pass from our souls for ever, drinking up
Its wormwood and its gall, our lips to spare.

THE LESSON.

I SAID, This task is keen—

But even while I spake, Thou, Love Divine,
Didst stand behind, and gently over-lean

My drooping form, and, oh ! what task had been
Too stern for feebleness with help of Thine ?
Spell Thou this lesson with me line by line,

The sense is rigid, but the voice is dear ;
Guide Thou my hand within that hand of Thine—
Thy wounded hand !—until its tremblings take
Strength from Thy touch, and even for Thy sake
Trace out each character in outline clear.

THE TWO RELIGIONS.

THE heart is like the World,
A dreamer, yea, a Pagan in its youth ;
It takes its visions, being fair, for truth,
And seeks no further ; loving best to brood
In lonely thought, it throngs its solitude
With wondrous shapes, it flings upon the air
Its Shadow, worshipping before that fair
And floating semblance ! caring but to please
The noble and the beautiful, for these
Its flowery altars shine ; it will not seek
Communion with the baser crowd, in scorn
It holds all lowly things, and for the weak
It takes no thought ;

Yet hath this haughty creed
Been found too narrow for its scope, too cold
E'en for the soil that raised it ; in its need
The spirit turns from it, as from its old
Fond faiths the Earth revolted ; each hath tried,
And each, grown weary, casts the broken chain
Away, to greet a purer Worship, wide
As is the world that it was made for, warm
As Heaven that it was sent from ; it hath place
For all, it gathers in a wide embrace
Things disesteemed, it goeth forth to seek
The things that none desire ; its words are meek
Yet eloquent ; it loveth in the shade
Of inner calm to muse, yet will not shun
The Many, looking in the face of One
Divine, yet like unto His brethren made !

LOVE.

O LOVE, thou goodly child,
Though not its own, the World makes much of
Thee !

Thou mindest me of him from out the wild
Bulrushes drawn, and at a royal knee
Brought up with songs and nurtured tenderly.
Sweet songs are sung to thee, yet thou dost sing
Far sweeter back, because the mystic bee
Hives ever on thy lips, and Egypt's king
And courtiers, failing of thy company,
Would wearier grow of all their pageantry
Than infants of their toys that for the moon
Cry out. Yet thou thyself dost weary soon
Of Egypt's hollow show, and being grown
To thy full stature wilt no more disown

Thy country and thy brethren ; thou wilt turn
To share their task-work, yet wilt not unlearn
The precious lore of Egypt ; and the songs
That Pharaoh's daughter taught thee wilt recall
 Full sweetly on thy harp of many strings—
Thou needest them, to plead thy people's wrongs
 Thy Master yet may send thee before Kings !

IN SADNESS.

A CHILD in sickness left behind its mates

Upon a summer holiday, from tears
Refrains himself a little while, and waits
Perchance in hope to see some comrade kind

Come back to play with him ; but no ! he hears
Their voices die away, and up the hill
Now, thinks he, they are climbing, now they wind
Along the hedgerow path, and now they find
The berries that o'erhang it ; even now
The red ripe nuts from off the hazel bough
Are dropping fast, and then across the brook

He hears them shouting to each other, through
The alder-bushes. So his thoughts pursue
Those wanderers on their way, until his look

Steals wistful to the sunshine, and his book
Drops from his hand ; what would he with that glad
Free company ? too weary for their glee,
Too weak to join their sports—yet he is sad ;
Then comes his mother, lifting tenderly
Her darling on her knee, and all his day
Glides peaceful on, though none come back to play.
The house is very still ; none come between
Their quiet talk, she smiles on him serene,
He speaketh oft to her of those away :
So, Father, I am left ! I will not mourn
To follow after them, so I may be
The closer to Thy heart ;—so I am drawn
Through stillness and through sadness nearer Thee !

THE SUMMONS.

METHOUGHT from out the crowd a steadfast
eye

Did single out mine own ! a voice Divine
Was borne within my soul, in tones that made
Such depth of music there, the sense did fade

Through sweetness that it kindled ; Lord, for Thine
I knew the voice full well ! and yet I heard
Of all Thou spakest then one only word ;

My Name ! Thou calledst me ! I must prepare
For Thee this day ! and wilt Thou come and share

My Mid-day meal, while I with heart elate
Shall wait on Thee, or wilt Thou rather wait
On me, Thy servant ? through this noontide glare
Thy Banner drawing tenderly, to spread

An early dusk that I may lay my head

The sooner at Thy supper on Thy breast?

It matters little, Lord ! or come or send—

Take Thou my spirit hence, or like a Friend

Make Thou thy home within it,—I am blest.

PAX IN NOVISSIMO.

“ He gave her therewith a sure token that he was a true messenger, and was come to bid her make haste to be gone. The token was an arrow, sharpened with love, let easily into her heart ;—so Christiana knew that her time was comè.”

NOT like the rulers of our vanities
At earthly feasts art Thou, O Love Divine ;
These pour their best at first, and still decline
At each full-flowing draught, till only lees
Of bitterness remain, but Thou dost please
To keep unto the last Thy richest wine.

And now this grace-cup, crowned with flowers, o'erflows
To meet my lips, the music never fell
More sweet, yet from the banquet, ere its close,
I rise to bid the company farewell ;
I see no sign, I hear no warning bell,

No airy tongue my Summoner hath been,
Yet all my soul by cords invisible
Is drawn the surer unto One unseen ;

For oh, my Father ! whom I have desired
By night, and sought for early, not through Man
Or Angel have I at Thy voice inquired

Since first my solemn quest for Thee began ;
Thee, only Thee my spirit hath required
For Teacher and for Counsellor and Friend ;
So now Thou needest me, Thou dost not send
By any other, but within the shade

Thy awful Presence makes, ere yet the fall
Of evening darkens, I can hear Thee call,
“Come home, my child !” and I am not afraid ;
Though oft Thou showedst me a brow austere,
And oft Thy lessons, hard to understand,
Were grievous to me, now Thou drawest near
I see Thy smile,* I do not feel Thy hand.

And He, our Brother kind,
Wounded and grieved by us, yet waiting where
He passed before our Mansions to prepare,
Made Himself strange at first ; I did not find

* Note F.

An instant welcome ; oft with speech severe
He questioned me, and oft methought His ear
Was turned away, but now I feel His tear

Upon my cheek, His kiss upon my soul ;
He biddeth all withdraw, while with His Own
He talketh : “ How is this, Thou hast not known
Thy Brother ? I am Joseph,”—now no more

Doth Love refrain itself because its goal
Is well-nigh won, and all its trial sore
O'erpast, it leaveth with a brow serene
The secret Chamber where so oft unseen
It wept before ;

For oft-times Love must grieve ;
For us content and willing to be sad,
It left the Halls wherein they made it glad,
And came to us that grieved it ! oft below
It hides its face because it will not show
The stain upon it ! now I feel its clear
Full shining eyes upon me, and I know
Soon I shall meet the kiss without the tear !

For all my life grows sweet,
I know not how to name it ; from behind

Comes up a murmur voluble and fleet
Of mingling voices, some were harsh, some kind,
But all are tuned to gentleness, the wind
That bears them onwards hath so soft a wing,
As if it were a Dove unused to bring
Aught but a loving message ; so Earth sends
One only question on it from the track
Where I have passed, "Friends, friends? we part as
friends?"

And all my soul takes up and sendeth back
One word for echo and for answer, "Friends."

And, oh, how fair this Earth
I leave !—methinks of old I never took
Account of half its loveliness and worth ;
Yea ! oft I mourned because I could not look
More deep within the pages of this Book,
God's glorious Book shut in between the eves
And glowing morns, I read betwixt the leaves
Like one that passes hastily, and failed
To catch its import ; yet hath One prevailed
To loose its golden clasps, and on her knee
He biddeth Nature lift me tenderly,
And read thereout her Fairy tales, and tell

Where lie her treasures guarded with a spell.
She takes me to her heart, she will not hold
A secret from me now ! things new and old
She brings to please me. Yet, as if she knew—
 A loving nurse—that soon her child must sleep,
 And waken in a land where all things keep
Their first simplicity—she doth renew
Her forms that charmed me earliest ;

 With the dew
Still hanging round them, well I know these flowers
She holds before me ; through the noontide hours
I looked not on their hues ; they did not burst
To gorgeous life, like some that I have nursed,
Shut from the ruder air, until they caught
Through each broad leaf a colouring of thought,
And spake a symbol-language too intense,
 The while each lamp-lit urn
 Did glow and spread and burn
Its heart away in odours, till the sense
Waxed faint through fragrance ; not like these of bold
 Magnificence, nor dearer flowers that grew
Familiar by my path, with whom of old
 I talked so secretly, it seemed we drew

A common breath, until methought they took
A human aspect, and like friends that know
Too much the heart's deep history, their look
Hath oft-times troubled me ;

But *these* did blow
For me in meadows wide, ere yet I knew
That flowers were charactered with joy or grief ;
Ye hid no secret in your folded leaf,—
Flowers innocent and cool
That hung above the pool,
Or thrid with gold the pleasant pastures through ;
I learnt no "*Ai, Ai*," in your school,
Quaint orchis, speedwells blue,
And slender cups that grew
Deep in the woods, pale purple-veined and brimming
o'er with dew !

I see the quiet glade
Slope sunward, shut among its hills that lie
With light upon their brows ; I hear the cry
Of wheeling rooks, the little brook goes by
And lifts a hurrying voice as one afraid
To linger on its way ; within the shade

Moss-cushioned now I sit, where once my day
Cast all its wealth of Summer hours away
Upon a book of Marvels ; sunbeams hid
Among the boughs came trickling down, and slid
From page to page to light me on my way ;
—The charm that fled, the glory that forsook
Flow back upon my spirit ; I am glad
Of ye, sweet scenes, sweet thoughts ! I know the look
Ye turn upon me, it hath nothing sad ;
Long, long ago, yet not through blame of mine,
I left you far behind me on my track,
Now flits the shadow on Life's Dial back,
Twice ten degrees to find you ! things Divine
Are imaged by the earthly, it was meet
That I should gather in my soul these sweet,
Long-parted childish fancies, ere I go
Where none but children enter ;

Even so ;

I sleep at noon ; all household noises cease,
No voices call me from without ; the room
Is hushed and darkened round me ; through the gloom
One friend beloved keeps moving to and fro
With step so quiet, oft I only know
Her presence by her gentle breathing,—Peace !

A MEDITATION.

“ I believe in the Communion of Saints.”

THE World doth love its own,
Doth praise its own, doth keep their memories
young ;
Where warrior once hath bled, where poet sung,
Time's dust may never gather,—hill and stream
Catch up heroic echoes, and the lone
Vaucluse still murmurs of the music thrown
Around it by one fervid Lover's dream.

The World doth love its own,
But unto you that loved it, hath it proved
It was not worthy of ye ! little loved
Or loved amiss, how hard hath been your lot !

Followed with worship that ye had disclaimed,
And warned each suppliant, "See thou do it not,"
Or like to cherished friends that on its throne
The heart hath lifted, till too rudely blamed
For overprizing, it hath grown ashamed,
And taken from them that which was their own,
So are ye little treasured, coldly named,
Remembered with vain honours, or forgot !

And ours hath been the loss :
Our silence grieves you not, our erring praise
Perchance doth never reach you where you raise
Your fuller, sweeter song to Him whose brow
Doth wear the Many Crowns upon it, "Thou
Art only worthy, Thou who art our Praise."
Yes ! ours hath been the loss,
For ye are ours ! the lives ye held not dear
Were given for us ! strong champions of the Cross,
Who went before us in God's faith and fear,
Your blood makes rich our heritage ; no tear
Of yours but lies upon it still like dew,
No word of yours but yet hath power to cheer—
Ye have not need of us, but we of you !

And oh, Belovèd ones, my lips are fain
To speak of you ! this heart of mine so long

Hath communed with you, they may not refrain
To pay you honour in a guileless song ;

I will not fear to do the Master wrong
In praising you, His servants, whom, unseen,

I love in Him. As oft a stranger's mien
Grows sudden dear through summoning the face

Of friend beloved, so have I joyed to trace
Your features back to His, and in the tone

Ye use, a sweeter voice hath still been known ;
Nor read I blame within their ardent eyes,

Our elder, stronger Brethren of the skies,
That unto me their names, their effigies

Have been less dear than yours, who did not move
About your work with them* whose feet of flame

Upon their Master's errand went and came
As in the lightning flash ; with footsteps slow

And wearied oft, kind ministers ! ye went
About this lower House of His, intent

On humblest household tasks, and for the sake

Of this great family, with care opprest,
That it might fare the sweeter, ye did wake

* Ezekiel i. 14.

Betimes, and watch that it might safer rest.
Ye wore not then the Halo on your brow,*
But bound on rugged paths, where once of old
Your Master toiled, where toil your brethren now,
Ye had not Angels for your mates, but cold
Dull hearts were round you, that within your own
Ye warmed, till oft their chillness deadly grown
Hath made your hands, hath made your bosoms ache !
For oft, methinks, true Lovers ! loved the less
For more abundant loving, bitterness
Was wrung within your cup while ye did strain
Thereout your balms of healing ; yea, the Vine
Was bruised within your souls to make them wine
That trampled down its tendrils ! yet this pain
Ye took in meekness, nor of outward foe
Made much account that knew a subtler foe,
A sorer strife, a plague-spot lying bare
To one loved eye, and fain ye would be fair
To meet that only eye ; so, faint yet still
Pursuing, oft ye look unto the hill,
From thence expecting aid, and not in vain.
Now have ye reached the Mount of God ! no stain
Lies on your robes, and all your faces shine

* Note G.

As shone they never here, while yet in frail
Coarse vessels all your heaven-won treasure lay,
While oft the light within would pale and pine
Because the lamp that bore it was of clay—
Now, far behind the shrouding veil, your way
Leads on from grace to grace, and yet you say,

“*Here it is good to be:*” of this your state
We know not now, but this still doth appear ;
Though none have left the chambers where ye wait
To tell us if their light be dark or clear,
And he who looked upon you there, the Seer
Beloved, hath spoken little, if ye wake
Or sleeping, where you take your solemn rest—
Yet hath a voice from Heaven proclaimed you surely
blest !

And if ye wake or sleep,
Or wrapt yet conscious in a Calm between
That stealeth not on Earth, ye lie serene,
Doth matter little—solemn, sweet and deep
Must be your rest with Him whose eyelids keep
Their watch above, for He can bless in sleep
His own beloved ones ;

But is there prayer

Within your quiet Homes, and is there care
For those ye leave behind? I would address
My spirit to this theme in humbleness :

No tongue nor pen hath uttered or made known
This mystery, and thus I do but guess

At clearer types through lowlier patterns shown ;

Yet when did Love on earth forsake its own?*

Ye may not quit your sweetness, in the Vine
More firmly rooted than of old, your wine

Hath freer flow ! ye have not changed, but grown
To fuller stature ; parting hath but shown
True hearts their hidden riches, friend to friend
More clear revealing,—what is Death to rend
The ties of life and love, when He must fade
In light of very Life, when He must bend
To Love, that loving, loveth to the end?

I do not deem ye look

Upon us now, for be it that your eyes
Are sealed or clear, a burden on them lies

Too deep and blissful for their gaze to brook
Our troubled strife ; enough that once ye dwelt

* Note H.

Where now we dwell, enough that once ye felt
As now we feel, to bid you recognize
Our claim of kindred cherished though unseen ;
And Love that is to you for eye and ear
Hath ways unknown to us to bring you near,—
To keep you near for all that comes between ;
As pious souls that move in sleep to prayer,
As distant friends, that see not, and yet share
(I speak of what I know) each other's care,
So may your spirits blend with ours ! above
Ye know not haply of our state, yet Love
Acquaints you with our need, and through a way
More sure than that of knowledge—só ye pray !

And even thus we meet,
And even thus we commune ! spirits freed
And spirits fettered mingle, nor have need
To seek a common atmosphere ; the air
Is meet for either in this olden, sweet,
Primeval breathing of Man's spirit—Prayer !

And now your prayers are free,
Not hindered oft, as in this field below,
By One himself unblest, that envieth so

The bonds of Brotherhood he may not know,
He joys to fling a seed of enmity
'Twixt very friends ;—with anxious hearts, with hands
That rested not, ye wrought in scattered bands
Apart ; intent upon your work, a word
Would reach you from the distance, faintly heard,
That moved to anger ; yet the speech that vexed
The sorest, often was but Love perplex
To find one common tongue ; but now the sun
Hath fallen on you, all your task is done ;
Ye sit within the House with One whose kind
Prevailing counsels bring unto one mind
Its inmates, making brethren to agree,
And oft ye marvel that ye did not find
Each other sooner, soul in soul doth see
One kindred image shine, no longer dim
Through contact of its gold with baser clay—
The fruit is ripe, its husks have dropt away,
And ye are only what ye were in Him !

Oh ! Virgin Lilies rayed
With light and loveliness, that did declare
His perfect beauty here, that grew so fair

By only gazing on Him ! from the shade
Where God hath planted me I have essayed
To reach unto your sunshine ! though you keep
Your silence even from good words, I miss
No sign of greeting, nor have need of kiss
For sealing of our love ; for this is clear,
That ye are near me when I draw most near
To Him in Whom we meet : I see you shine
In Christ, as once I marked above a shrine

By midnight clear, yet moonless, pictured fair
A Virgin Mother in a lowly place

Bend o'er a sleeping Infant ; full of grace

His brow and lip ; with gifts and odours rare

Came Kings adoring, lowly Shepherds there
Rejoicing knelt, and all the canvas dim

Was crowded up behind with Seraphim

In goodly ranks ; yet Mother maid serene,

Sage Seraph, lowly Shepherd, all were seen

By Light that streamed from out the Babe Divine !

LATER POEMS.



A FAREWELL TO YOUTH.

A MIDSUMMER DAY'S DREAM.

THOU fair and hurrying guest !
O Youth, in tears half-drowned,
And half with roses crowned !
Thou sweetness unpossessed !
I pine not for the sound
Of thy swift wings, thy sighs,
Thy whispers, nor thine eyes'
Soft, silent language seek, that sent around
So many a glance, caressing and caressed ;
Nor grieve I for thy song,
Glad, sad, and sweet, so long
Remembered, though its cadence broke so soon :
A fond farewell, O Youth,
I take of thee ! thy truth

Was sweet, and e'en thy falsehood scarce beguiled ;
For thou, thyself a child,
Believing, hoping, loving, didst receive
And give with equal hand, and sweetly keep
And sweetly break thy troth, and wake and sleep
In peace through every change, unchilled, ungrieved ;
 Thy Waking and thy Dream
 So sweet, so close did seem,
That thou wert blest, deceiving or deceived.

And thou wouldst not remain
To hear reproachings vain ;
A print upon the grass, a line between
The rustling boughs of sudden-parted green,
And thou wert gone for ever ! Truly fled ?
 I know not yet ! methinks within my heart
Thou hidest still thy bright unsheltered head,
 And dost remain, for evermore a part
Of all things fair, and from the violet's eye
Thy smile looks up, thy breath goes wandering by
In many a wild, warm, briery-scented sigh,
Linked with all lovely things that change and cannot
 die !

So come and go, dear Youth,
I will not chide with thee ! for now the mist
Hath rolled all up the glittering hills sun-kissed,
And broad around me stretch the woods, the plains ;
And still the landscape widens, still the sky
Bends over all with broad, unwinking eye,
Above an equal blue, an equal green
Below, and nought is hidden ! all is seen
And all is known ! But now methinks the lanes
Grow white and dusty, and no flower remains
With brimming cup, no descant wild and shrill
Of all that morn and eve were wont to thrill
My listening ear ; the reapers work in bands,
But all is silent : where are now the hands
That sought for mine, the dances light and free ?
The tales that seemed beginning still to be,
And pausing woke again, and still were sweet to me ?

But now upon the clear
Calm summer air, I hear,
Far on the silence borne, a distant strain ;
A tune that gives and takes,
That hushes while it wakes,
That loosens while it binds a gentle chain :

So sweetly on the sense
It falls, I ask not whence
It comes, nor know I whither goes that tune
More soft than summer dews—
Most like a hand that woos
An arrow forth—and while I listen, seems
Far off and faint, like music heard in dreams,
To change and fade each dim, half-shrouded pain ;
Each fond regret, each care
Is fled ;—oh, tell me where,
Dear Shepherd, Thou dost feed Thy flocks at noon ?

Oh, tell me in what still
Fair meadows at Thy will
Thou ledest them ? by what glad streamlet's flow ?
Perchance upon the rocks
Thou sittest now, Thy flocks
With reedy murmurs soothing, while the low
Soft summer winds reply ; or by the Well
Thou sittest now, perchance, as once befell
When Thou wert wearied with the noontide glare.
Oh, long-belovèd, let me find Thee *there*,
And there with Thee abide ; the shadows soon
Will fall and darken o'er these pathways wide ;

Oh, let me be no more as one aside
That turns unwilling! by Thy tents I dwell,
Thy dear companions know me! Shepherd, tell,
Where dost Thou make Thy flocks to rest at noon?

THE WHITE CRUSADE—ITALY, 1860.

“ And the earth helped the woman.”—REV. xii. 16.

L ONG, long the foot of pride
Trode down the human heart from hour to hour
With iron heel, and ever on the side
Of tyrants there was power ;

Till, seventy summers back,
A Cry went up by night to God for food ;
A raven's cry, a lion's, on the track
Of rapine and of blood ;

And Freedom at the sound
Stirred where she lay within her grave for dead,
And rose up from the earth, and gazed around
Like one disquieted.

As one that hath been dead

Four days, she rose up from her grave ; she woke
Fast bound with grave-clothes, hands, and feet, and
head ;

Yet when she rose she spoke :

Like Lazarus from the tomb

She rose, and stood upright ; like him a while
She walked with men,—yet on her cheek no bloom,
And on her lip no smile.

As one that sleeping shakes

Beneath a ghastly slumber-coil, will seem
To wake at dead of night, yet only wakes
Into a fearful dream ;

She woke into a world

Of wreck and ruin ; winds and waves that roared,
Men's hearts that failed, and goodliest treasures hurled
To monsters overboard.

They called her, but she shrank ;

She stretched her hands to bless, and, lo ! a stain
Of blood upon each palm ! She groaned, and sank
Into her grave again.

Yet 'mid the tumult fierce

That gathered as she fell, was faintly heard
From fainting lips—a blessing or a curse—
And yet a treasured word ;—

And still from land to land

The whisper grew, and still the murmur sped
By look, by sign, by pressure of the hand,
“ The maiden is not dead.”

Till every heart that knew

A stronger beat, that shook a looser chain,
Caught up the word, until its meaning grew
From hour to hour more plain.

And some would watch for hours

Beside her tomb, until they seemed to hear,
Beneath the winter's ice, the summer's flowers,
A breathing low and clear.

The nations spake : “ But who

Shall roll away this heavy stone, by day
And night close sealed and watched ? ” They came,
and lo !

The stone was rolled away !

And clothed in raiment white

From head to feet, was seated on the stone
A Shining Form, that earth had given to light
Without a travail-groan.

No blood on brow or palm,

Or on her robe, but in her steadfast eye,
And on her lips, a summons clear and calm :
“ *Who loves, knows how to die.*”

The swords of friends and foes

Are crossed before her breast ; her breast is bare,
And bare her feet, and on the way she goes
Lies the red burning share.

She wakes, perchance to show

Of wounds received in houses of her friends,—to
weep,
Like Rachel, o'er her sons brought forth in woe,
YET NEVER MORE TO SLEEP !

THE CLEFT.

1861.

“ Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

. . . .

“ Oh, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.”

THE skies have voices soft
And loud, they mutter oft,
Dissolve and break in tears of joy and wonder ;
More fierce the shock, the din
More harsh, when from within
Earth shakes, self-torn, and riven with secret thunder ;

And now a ghastly cleft
Yawns wide from right to left,
And sucks and draws the Western World within it ;
What voice, what arm uplift
This dire encroaching rift
May close with sovereign spell ? and how begin it ?

In such a gulf of old
The Roman flung, not gold,
But Youth's heroic hope and Strength's endeavour ;
Yet this one of the best
Hath ta'en, and for the rest
Still craves, unclosed, insatiate, widening ever.

Say, will ye smoothe it over,
And bid the maid and lover
Dance here away their light-linked hours of leisure ?
Yea, smoothe it over, sow it
With grass and flowers ; below it
Are sounds that mingle strangely with the measure.

Or, leaning o'er its edges,
Now will ye barter pledges
With clasping hands, and talk of hearts combining,
Or plant the rootless tree
Within it—LIBERTY,
Hung round with garlands and with ribbons shining ?

The jagged cleft from side
To side yawns yet more wide ;

And Echo from within, your words recalling,
Hath sent from out the ground
The yet more hollow sound
Of loosened earth upon a coffin falling.

Then let it yawn to sever
The Bond and Free for ever :
Than Falsehood's hectic flush of vain relying,
On Freedom's cheek more fair
The glow of health, though there
Across it broad and deep a scar be lying !

Yea, let the sword pierce through
This tangle, and undo
The knot that doth but harder twist for friction :
Oh, seek not now to bind
What God hath loosed ! no kind
Espousals these, but fettered, galled constriction.

When life meets life with kiss
Of rapture strong, oh ! *this*
Is union, this is strength ; then leave the dying
With Death their troth to plight,
In charnel vaults by night,
'Mid dead men's bones and all uncleanness lying.

There leave them ! let the wide,
Deep chasm still divide
'Twixt Night and Day, 'twixt Light and Darkness,—
 know
That greater than the whole
Is now the part ; the soul
Is nobler than the body,—let them go !

THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

“**L**EARN to live, and live and learn,”
In the days when I used to go to school,
Would always pass for an excellent rule ;
But now it's grown a serious concern
The number of things I've had to *unlearn*
Since first I began the page to turn
Of *The Saturday Review*.
For once (I believe) I believed in truth
And love, and the hundred foolish things
One sees in one's dreams and believes in one's youth—
In Angels with curls, and in Angels with wings,
In Saints, and Heroes, and Shepherds too ;
The pictures that David and Virgil drew
So sweetly, I thought were taken

From very life, but now I find
A Shepherd is but an uncouth Hind,
Songless, soulless, from time out of mind,
Who has cared for nothing but bacon.

And though to confess it may well seem strange,
When I had them by scores and dozens
(I was young, to be sure, and all things change),
I really *have* liked my cousins,
And schoolfellows too, and can bring to mind
Some uncles of mine who were truly kind,
And aunts who were far from crusty ;
And even my country neighbours too
Didn't seem by half such a tedious crew
As now I find they must be.

And I used to think it might be kind,
In the world's great marching order,
To help the poor stragglers left behind,
Halt and maimed, and broken and blind,
On their way to a distant border ;
Not to speak of the virtuous poor, I thought
There was here and there a sinner

Might be mended a little, though not of the sort

One would think of asking to dinner.

But now I find that no one believes

In Ragged Children, or Penitent Thieves,

Or Homeless Homes, but a few Old Maids

Who have tried and failed at all other trades,

And who take to these things for recreation

In their aimless life's dull Long Vacation.

And so as we're going along with the Priest

And Levite (the roads are more dry in the East)

We need have no hesitation,

When the mud is lying about so thick,

To scatter a little and let it stick

To the coat of the Good Samaritan, used

To be spattered, battered, blackened, and bruised ;

These sort of people don't mind it the least—

Why, bless you, it's *their* vocation !

Yet sometimes I've thought it a little strange,—

When good people get such very hard change,

In return for their kindly halfpence,

When the few who are grieved for sorrows and sins

Are bowled to the earth like wooden pins,

When to care for the heathen, or pity the slave,
Sets a man down for fool or knave,

With *The Saturday* in its sapience,—
Things that are mean and base and low
Are checked by never a word or blow ;
The gaping crowds that go in hope
To see Blondin slip from the cruel rope
Tightened or slack, and come away
In trust of more luck another day,

Meet never a line's reproving ;
Heenan and Sayers may pound and thwack
Each other blue and yellow and black,
And only get a pat on the back

From the power that keeps all moving.

And I sometimes think, if this same Review,
And the world a little longer too
Should last, will the violets come out blue ?
Will the rose be red, and will lovers woo
In the foolish way that they used to do ?
Will doves in the summer woodlands coo,
And the nightingales mourn without asking leave ?
Will the lark have an instinct left to cleave

The sunny air with her song and her wing?—
Perhaps we may move to abolish spring ;
And now that we've grown so hard to please,
We may think that we're bored by the grass and the
trees ;

The moon may be proved a piece of cheese,
Or an operatic delusion.

Fathers and Mothers may have to go,
Brothers and Sisters be voted slow,
Christmas a tax that one's forced to pay,
And Heaven itself but an out-of-the-way
Old-fashioned place that has had its day,
That one wouldn't a residence choose in.

And though so easily learnt, and brief
Is the form our new faith's put in,
When we've said, " I believe in a Round of Beef,
And live by a Leg of Mutton,"
We come to another region of facts,
That are met quite as well by the Gospel and *Acts*
As by any teaching that's newer—
Life has its problems hard to clear,
And its knots too stiff to be cut by the sneer
Of the sharpest, smartest Reviewer.

October, 1863.

A DIALOGUE.

IN 1863.

“WELL, what news have you got to-day, neighbour?” “Why, the Prince is going to be wed

To the Princess Royal of Denmark.” “Ay, so I hear it is said,

And she’ll be a grand young lady, there’s no doubt at all; but you see

I never set eyes on the Prince in my life, and he knows nought about me.”

“And what other news have you got, neighbour?”

“Oh terrible news: abroad

The great Garibaldi’s taken and wounded.” “Was he some Lord

Or King? But I know so little of these people beyond
the sea,
They seem to be always fighting, it's a pity they can-
not agree."

"Why, then, if you come to fighting, the Yankees are
at it still,
As hard as ever they were at the first." "Well, they
must then, if they will.
I suppose they're a sort of cousins of ours ; but then
they're so very far
Removed, that it doesn't much matter to us how long
they go on with the war."

"Now there you are out for once, neighbour, for it's
neither more nor less
Than their keeping up of this war so long that's caus-
ing our great distress.
They've given up growing their cotton, and sending
us any to spin,
And that's the way things keep going wrong, you see,
when once they begin.

“You’re not a reader like me, neighbour, or you
wouldn’t soon forget
The things that they tell in the papers; my word, but
they’re sharply set
In Lancashire now; and it’s my belief, that if things
don’t soon work through
They’ll be taking to dying off pretty fast, if they’ve
nothing else left them to do.

“Why now, how would *you* like it, neighbour? I
think you would look rather blank
If you hadn’t a shilling left in the house, nor a guinea
left in the Bank,
If first you’d to part with your silver watch, and then
with your handsome clock,
And then with your quilt, and blankets, and bed, till
at last you came to the stock!

“Until when you looked about your room there was
nothing to see at all
But just a table, perhaps, and a chair, and the roof and
the floor and the wall.

And how would you like to sell your best black coat
that you've worn so long?
Or your wife to have to go out and pawn her 'good
Sunday cloak for a song?"

"I shouldn't like it at all, neighbour; and as to my
wife, why she
Would take on, perhaps, if all were known, a great
deal worse than me."
"And then when there's nothing to do, you see, there's
always so little to eat;
And only think of the children, neighbour, how they
must be missing their meat!

"Now there's that curly Jem of yours, that likes nothing
he gets so well
As what he gets with his granny and you, as I've heard
you so often tell,
That just when you're sitting down to your meat he's
sure to come peeping in,
You wouldn't like it so well, neighbour, to see him
growing thin."

"I shouldn't like it at all, neighbour, I tell you, but
where's the good
Of talking when folks are starving? sure I'd help them
if I could."

"Well, there's nothing so easy as that, neighbour, you
haven't got far to send—
It's only like taking a bit of your dinner across to an
ailing friend."

"Why, not quite so easy as that, neighbour, for if
things are as bad as you say,
It's little to better them that we can do by giving
them once in a way."

"Well, giving them once in a way perhaps *would* come
rather short; but then
There is nothing to stop us, that I can see, from giving
them once and again."

"Why that's very pretty talk, neighbour, but then to
be always giving
Doesn't come quite so easy to folks like us that have
to work hard for our living."

“Well, as to the matter of that, neighbour, if we haven’t got much to spare
There’ll just be the less to send, but still we may always have something to share.

“We might all of us give far more than we do, without being a bit the worse ;

It was never yet loving that emptied the heart, or giving that emptied the purse.

We must be like the woman our Saviour praised, and do but the best we can.”

“Ay, that’ll be just the plan, neighbour, that’ll be just the plan.”

A SONG TO CALL TO REMEMBRANCE.

A Plea for the Coventry Ribbon-Weavers.

I HEARD a little maiden sing, "What can the matter be"?

A simple song, a merry song, yet sad it seemed to me,
"Oh, my love is coming from the town, he is coming
from the Fair,
And he will bring me ribbons blue to tie my bonny
hair!"

O lasses fair, that love to wear—O lads, that love to
see

The ribbons bright, the ribbons rare—what can the
matter be?

At Christmas tide, when all beside are merry and are
glad,
How many English hearts are sore, how many homes
are sad !

The looms are stopped, the hands are still that
wrought the ribbons gay ;
When anxious fathers have no work the children dare
not play ;
No cheerful noise around the board ; oh ! little to
prepare !
The mother's work is quickly o'er, but not the
mother's care !

And all is dull and all is chill within the humble
room ;
Beside his black and fireless hearth, beside his idle
loom,
The poor man sits from day to day in garments worn
and thin,
And sees the homely comforts go he toiled so hard to
win.

The icicle hangs on the eaves, and silent as a stone
All Nature lies in sleep or death, chilled through unto
the bone ;

The earth below is white and cold, the skies are cold
and grey,

The grave seems very near, and Heaven seems very
far away.

Oh sad and short the wintry day, oh sad and long the
night,

When in the heart there is no hope, and in the house
no light,

No fire, no food ! yet goodly gifts, yet words of Chris-
tian cheer,

Can make the grave seem farther off, can make the
heavens more near.

Ye merry hearts, that meet to laugh and dance the
hours away,

Ye gentle hearts, that better love in sheltered homes
to pray,

Think on the homes whose Christmas guests are only
Want and Care,

Think on the hearts too sad for mirth, too sad per-
chance for prayer ;

For Want and Care are dreary mates, and where they
enter in
There Love should follow after quick, for Discontent
and Sin
Without the door are knocking loud—oh ! keep them
waiting there,
And hold at bay the prowling wolf of savage, gaunt
despair !

A little while and skies will clear that now are over-
cast ;
Our ship that rides 'mid heavy seas will right itself at
last ;
Come, loving hearts, come, open hands, with bounty
warm and wide,
Come, lend our struggling friends a lift, till the
turning of the tide.

January 10, 1861.

A NATIONAL SONG.

OF flowers that bloom in gardens fair, that bloom
in meadows free,

I had my choice of all that blow, and I chose me
only three ;

But I must have them all or none ! the first one that
I chose

Was Queen of all the flowers that be, the red, the
royal Rose !

The Rose that blooms upon the rock, and lets the salt
sea-spray

Drift over her, nor asks if this be anger or be play ;
She bows not down her stately head for any breeze
that blows,

She smiles in kindness on her friends, in pride upon
her foes.

A lion watches by her root, and all her gallant stem
Is set with thorns, ah, woe betide the hand that
touches them !

But deep within the rose's heart, in many a silken fold
Wrapt round, a costly treasure lies of fragrance and of
gold.

Then lone and free, on hill and lea, unguarded yet
unharm'd,

All green I saw the Thistle grow that groweth ready
armed,

She flings her arrowy seeds afar to thrive where'er they
fall,

Oh grasp the hardy thistle close, or grasp her not at
all !

Oh love the thistle well, for she will love thee to the
end,

For scorching sun she will not droop, for storm she
will not bend ;

How fair upon the thistle's head her purple-tasselled
crown,

And oh ! within the thistle's heart, how soft and warm
the down !

Yet must I farther on to seek a flower that loves the
West ;

I only found a little leaf, with mystic signs imprest ;
“ Hast thou no flower ? ” I sadly said, “ and hast thou
nought to show

But this thy high and heavenward hope, but this thy
patient woe ” ?

“ Yet saints have loved thee, fairies danced across
thee at thy birth,

And thine are gifts that suit with joy, and gifts that
suit with mirth ;

Shine on, green leaf, to kindly Trust, to Wit, to Valour
dear,

And still let Erin’s smile be ours, though smiling
through a tear.”

Of flowers that bloom in gardens fair, that blow in
meadows free,

Now have I had my choice of all, and I have chosen
three ;

I would not live, I would not die, I would not sing
for one,

I love them all so well that I must have them all or
none !

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

1863.

IF ye would hear the Angels sing
 “Peace on earth and mercy mild,”
Think of Him who was once a child,
On Christmas-Day in the morning.

If ye would hear the Angels sing,
 Christians ! see ye let each door
 Stand wider than ever it stood before,
On Christmas-Day in the morning.

*Rise, and open wide the door ;
 Christians, rise ! the world is wide,
 And many there be that stand outside,
Yet Christmas comes in the morning.*

If ye would hear the Angels sing,
Rise and spread your Christmas fare ;
'Tis merrier still the more that share,
On Christmas-Day in the morning.

*Rise, and bake your Christmas bread :
Christians rise ! the world is bare,
And bleak, and dark with want and care,
Yet Christmas comes in the morning.*

If ye would hear the Angels sing,
Rise and light your Christmas fire ;
And see that ye pile the logs still higher,
On Christmas-Day in the morning.

*Rise, and light your Christmas fire ;
Christians, rise ! the world is old,
And Time is weary, and worn, and cold,
Yet Christmas comes in the morning.*

If ye would hear the Angels sing,
Rise and spice your wassail bowl
With warmth for body, and heart, and soul,
On Christmas-Day in the morning.

*Spice it warm, and spice it strong,
Christians, rise! the world is grey,
And rough is the road, and short is the day,
Yet Christmas comes in the morning.*

If ye would hear the Angels sing,
Christians! think on Him who died;
Think of your Lord, the Crucified,
On Christmas-Day in the morning.

GO AND COME.

THOU sayest to us, "Go,
And work while it is called to-day ; the sun
Is high in heaven, the harvest but begun ;
Can hands oft raised in prayer, can hearts that know
The beat of Mine through love and pain be slow
To soothe and strengthen?" still Thou sayest " Go ;
Lift up your eyes and see where now the Line
Of God hath fallen for you, one with Mine
Your Lot and Portion. Go, where none relieves,
Where no one pities, thrust the sickle in
And reap and bind, where toil and want and sin
Are standing white, for here My harvests grow :
Go, glean for Me 'mid wasted frames outworn,
'Mid souls uncheered, uncared for ; hearts forlorn,

With care and grief acquainted long, unknown
To earthly friend, of Heaven unmindful grown ;
In homes where no one loves, where none believes,
For here I gather in my goodly sheaves ;”

Thou sayest to us, “Go.”

Thou sayest to us, “Go
To conflict and to death ;” while friends are few
And foes are many, what hast Thou to do

With peace, Thou Son of Peace ? A man of war
Art Thou from Youth ! when Thou dost girded ride,
Two stern instructors, Truth and Mercy, guide
Thy hand to things of terror ; friends and foes
Thine arrows feel ; a sword before Thee goes,
And after Thee a fire, confusion stirred
Among the nations even by the word
Of Meekness and of Right ; “Yea, take and eat
Of these my words,” Thou sayest, “they are sweet
As honey ; yet this roll that now I press
Upon your lips will turn to bitterness
When ye shall speak its message ; lo, a cry
Of wrath and madness, ere the ancient Lie
That wraps the roots of earth will quit its hold,
A shriek, a wrench abhorred ; and yet be bold,

Oh, ye my servants ! take my rod and stand
Before the King, nor fear if in your hand

It seem unto a serpent's form to grow ;
Rise up, my Priests ! my Mighty Men, with sound
Of solemn trumpet, walk this city round,
A blast will come from God, His word and will
Through hail, and storm, and ruin, to fulfil ;
Then shall ye see the Towers roll down, the Wall
Built up with blood, and tears, and tortures, fall,
And from the Living Grave the living Dead
Will rise, as from their sleep disquieted ;

O Earth, this Baptism of thine is slow !
Not dews from morning's womb, not gentle rains
That drop all night can wash away thy stains.—
The fire must fall from Heaven ; the blood must flow
All round the Altar ;"—still Thou sayest, "Go."

And that Thou sayest, "Go,"
Our hearts are glad ; for he is still Thy friend
And best beloved of all, Whom Thou dost send

The farthest from Thee ; this Thy servants know ;
Oh, send by whom Thou wilt, for they are blest
Who go Thine errands ! Not upon Thy breast
We learn Thy secrets ! Long beside Thy tomb

We wept, and lingered in the Garden's gloom ;
And oft we sought Thee in Thy House of Prayer
And in the Desert, yet Thou wert not there ;
But as we journeyed sadly through a place
Obscure and mean, we lighted on the trace
Of Thy fresh footprints, and a whisper clear
Fell on our spirits,—Thou Thyself wert near ;
And from Thy servants' hearts Thy name adored
Broke forth in fire ; we said, " It is the Lord."
Our eyes were no more holden ; on Thy face
We looked, and it was comely ; full of grace,
And fair Thy lips ; we held Thee by the feet,
We listened to Thy voice, and it was sweet,
 And sweet the silence of our spirits ; dumb
All other voices in the world that be
The while Thou saidest, " Come ye unto Me,"
 The while Thou saidest, " Come."

 We said to Thee, " Abide
With us, the Night draws on apace ;" but, lo !
 The cloud received Thee, parted from our side,
In blessing parted from us ! Even so
 The Heaven of Heavens must still receive Thee !
 dark

And moonless skies bend o'er us as we row,
No stars appear, and sore against our bark
The current sets ; yet nearer grows the Shore
Where we shall see Thee standing, never more
To bid us leave Thee ! though Thy Realm is wide,
And mansions many, never from Thy side
Thou sendest us again ; by springs serene
Thou guidest us, and now to battle keen
We follow Thee, yet still, in peace or war,
Thou leadest us. Oh, not to sun or star
Thou sendest us, but sayest, " Come to Me ;
And where I am, *there* shall My servants be."
Thou sayest to us, " COME."

A SONG

WHICH NONE BUT THE REDEEMED CAN SING.

WE came not in with broad
Full canvas swelling to a steady breeze,
With pennons flying fair, with coffers stored ;
For long against the wind, 'mid heavy seas,
With cordage strained and splintered masts, we drave ;
And o'er our decks had dashed the bitter wave,
And lightening oft our lading, life to save,
Our costly ventures to the Deep were given.
Yea ! some of us were caught, and homewards driven
Upon the storm-wind's wings, and some rock-riven
Among the treacherous reefs at anchor flung,
Felt the good ship break under them, and clung
Still to some plank or fragment of its frame
Amid the roaring breakers—Yet we came.

We came not in with proud,
Firm, martial footstep in a measured tread
Slow pacing to the crash of music loud ;
No gorgeous trophies went before, no crowd
Of captives followed us with drooping head,
No shining laurel sceptred us, nor crowned,
Nor with its leaf our glittering lances bound ;
This looks not like a Triumph, then they said.
With faces darkened in the battle flame,
With banners faded from their early pride,
Through wind, and sun, and showers of bleaching
rain,
Yet red in all our garments, doubly dyed,
With many a wound upon us, many a stain,
We came with steps that faltered—Yet we came !

Through water and through fire
We came to Thee, and not through these alone,
We came to Thee by blood ! Thou didst require
One only sacrifice, and like Thine Own,
The life Thou gavest us Thou didst desire,
And all was ready for us ! Lo, the knife
And cloven wood were waiting ; bound or free
We too were ready ! In the battle strife

Or by the lonely altar, unto Thee

We offered love for love, and life for life ;
Through swords, through seas, o'er sands of burning
flame

We came to Thee ! through toil and pain and loss ;
Yea ! all things failed us but the steadfast cross,
And hearts that clave to it while grief and shame
Still followed where we followed—Yet we came !



NOTES.

NOTE A.—P. 220.

*These too, if better known,
Were worthier prizing.*

“Though I love my friends dearly, and though they are good, I have, however, much to pardon, except in the single Klopstock alone. *He* is good, really good—good in all the foldings of his heart. I know him, and sometimes I think if we knew others in the same manner, the better we should find them. For it may be that an action displeases us which would please us if we knew its true aim and whole extent.”—*From the Letters of Meta Klopstock.*

NOTE B.—P. 225.

*I appeal
Unto my equals.*

“Perhaps love and grief may make me speak more than many will think fit. But though some passion blind the judgment, some doth but excite it to duty, and God made it to that end. *And I will not be judged by any that never felt the like.*”—RICHARD BAXTER *on his Wife's Death.*

NOTE C.—P. 247.

*They took no heed
Of Time or of his flight.*

“For still doth time in days of blessedness
Appear to stay upon his constant course ;
Then flows no sand, then strikes no warning bell :
Oh ! he has fallen from his Heaven already
Whose thoughts are heedful of the changing hours—
The happy hear no clock.”—WALLENSTEIN.

NOTE D.—P. 279.

*I lay on thee this task,
Entreat for me !*

“Brother Bradford, as long as I shall understand thou art on thy journey by God’s grace, I shall call upon our Heavenly Father for Christ’s sake to let thee safely home, and then, good brother, speak you, and pray for the remnant which are to suffer for Christ’s sake, according to that thou shalt then know more clearly.”—*Bishop Ridley, writing to Bradford the Martyr.*

NOTE E.—P. 286.

For Thou didst suffer Life for us.

“We bear with life for the sake of Him who suffered both life and death for us.”—PASCAL.

NOTE F.—P. 310.

I see Thy smile, I do not feel Thy hand.

“Rabia, a devout Arabian woman, being asked in her last illness, how she endured the extremity of her sufferings, made answer, ‘They who look upon God’s face do not feel His hand.’”
—*Milne’s Palm Leaves.*

NOTE G.—P. 319.

Ye wore not then the Halo on your brow.

“ ‘Elias was a man of like passions as we are,’ says St. James, to wean Christians from that false idea which makes us reject the examples of the saints as disproportioned to our own conditions ; These were saints, we cry, and not men like us. We look on them as being crowned in glory ; and now that time has cleared up things, it does really appear so. But at the time when the great Athanasius was persecuted, he was a man who bore that name ; and St. Teresa, in her day, was like the other religious sisters of her order.”—PASCAL.

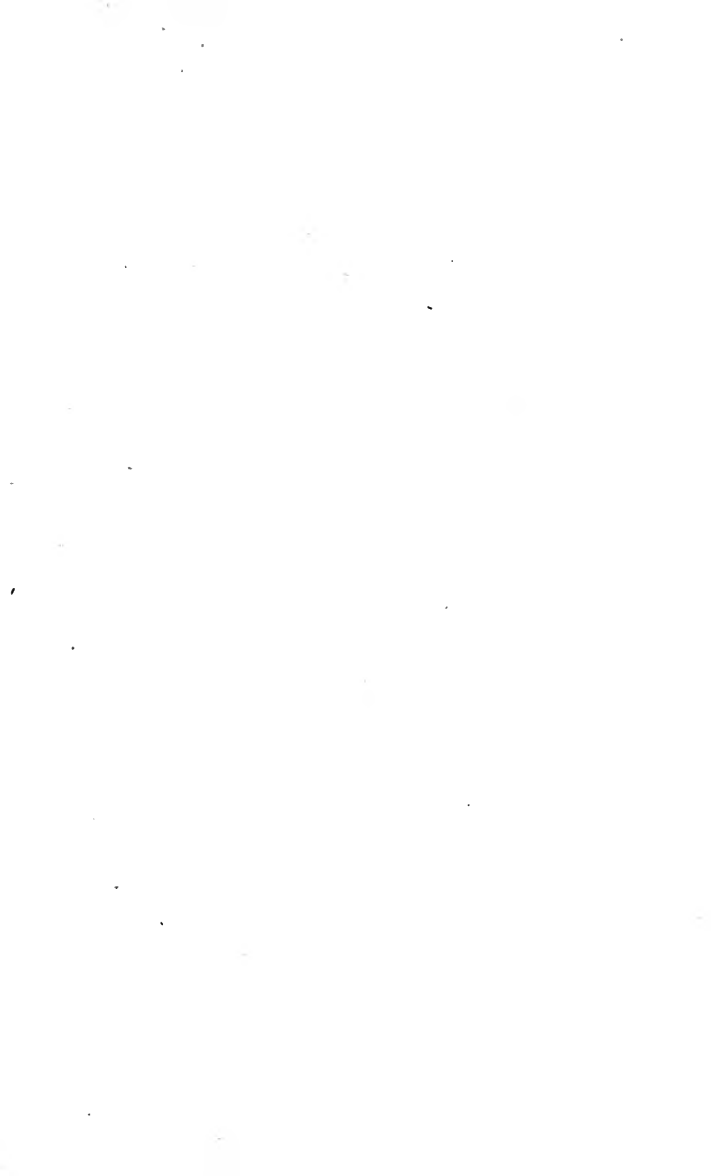
NOTE H.—P. 321.

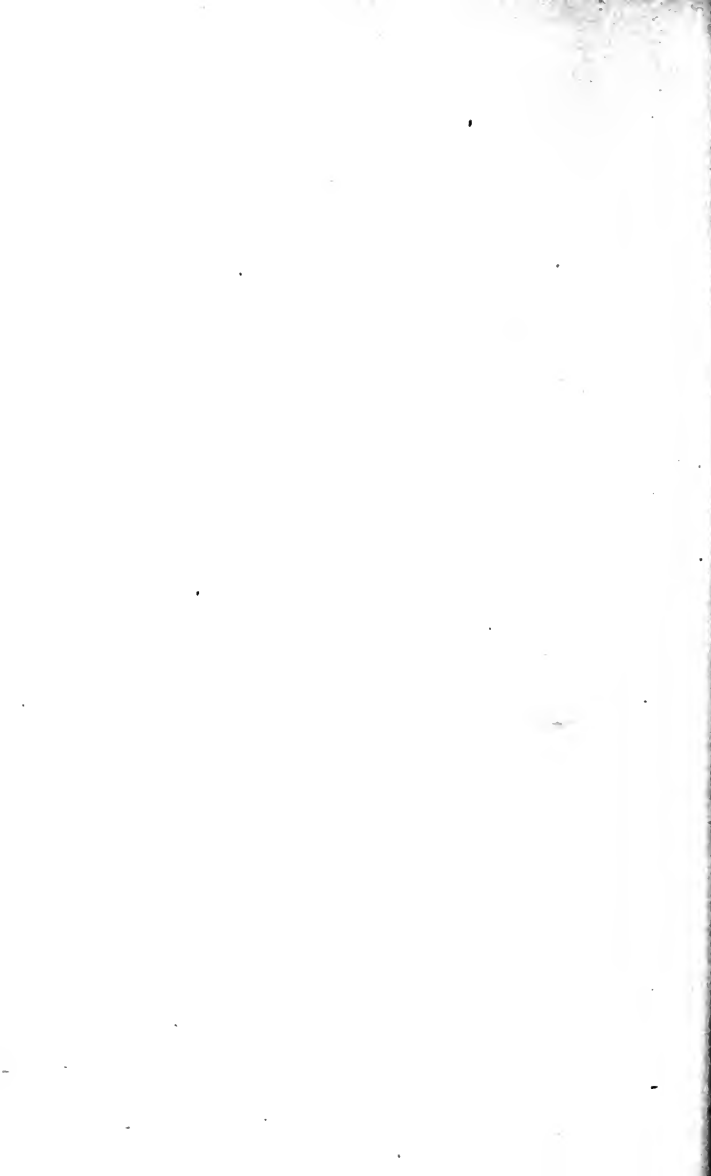
*When did Love on Earth forsake its own ?
Love like to yours ?*

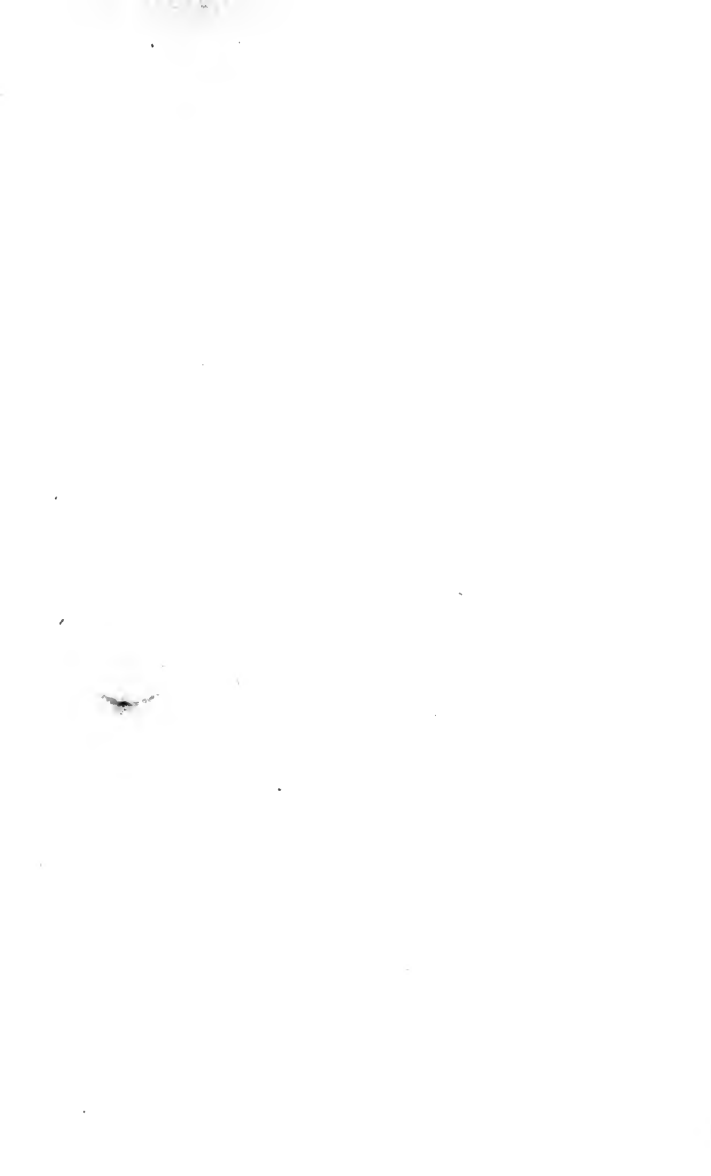
“ Fain would I know thy present feelings towards thy Brother, thy beloved, if indeed it is permitted to one bathing in the floods of Divine radiance, and transported with the happiness of eternity, to call to mind *our* misery, to be occupied with *our* grief. For perhaps though thou hast hitherto known us according to the flesh, yet now thou knowest us no longer. He who is joined to God is one spirit with God ; he can have no thought, no desire, save for God and for the things of God, with whose fulness he is filled. Yet ‘God is love,’ and the more closely a soul is bound to God, the more does it abound in love. It is true that God is impassible, but He is not insensible, for His ‘nature is to have mercy and to forgive ;’ so then, thou must be merciful, since thou art joined to Him who showeth mercy, and thine affection, though transformed, is no whit diminished. Thou hast laid aside thy infirmities, but not thy love, for ‘love

abideth,' saith the Apostle, *and throughout eternity thou wilt not forget me.* It seems to me that I hear my Brother saying, 'Can a woman forget her sucking child? Yea, they may forget, yet will I never forget thee.' Truly it is not expedient. Thou hast found greater consolations. Thou art in the ever-lasting presence of the Lord Jesus, and hast angels for thy companions; but what have I to fill up the void thou hast left? In all that has since happened I have looked to Gerard as I had been wont, and he is not."—*St. Bernard on the death of his Brother.*









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